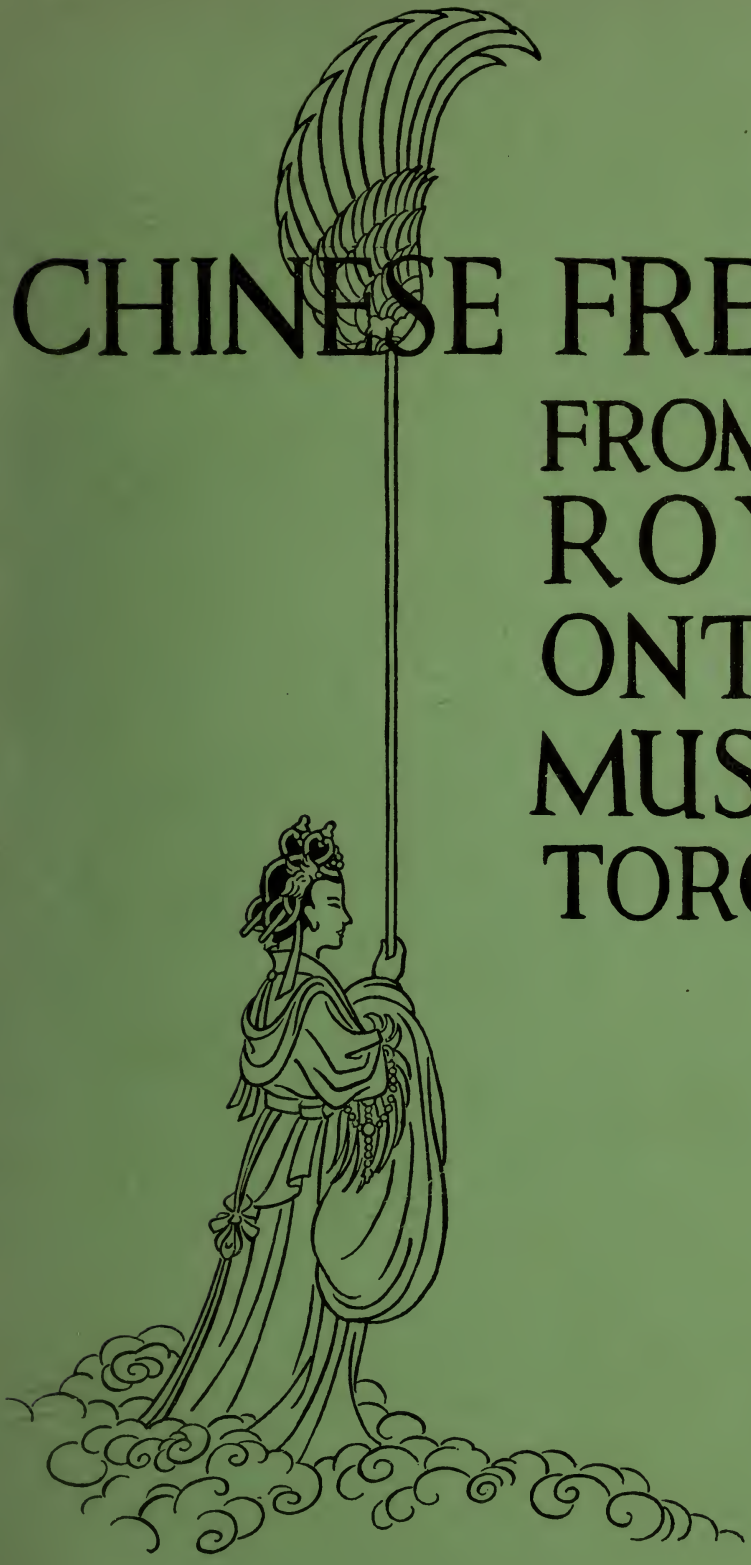
CHINESE FRESCOES

FROM THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM TORONTO



The Chinese Temple frescoes described in these three Bulletins are the gift of the Flavelle Foundation. They are given in memory of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., LL.D., for many years a Trustee of the Royal Ontario Museum.

BULLETIN OF
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM
OF ARCHAEOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, JULY, 1937 (Revised, August, 1950) No. 12

Buddha Maitreya

FIGURE 1

Chinese Temple Wall Fresco; about 1300 A.D. From Hsing Hua Monastery, near Chi-shan, South Shansi. Theme: Maitreya in Ketumati, with two royal tonsure scenes.

FIGURE 2. Key to Chinese Buddhist Fresco.

LEFT HAND GROUP

19. Queen Syāmavatī of Ketumatī receiving the tonsure
20. Celestial Being acting as barber
21. Lady in Waiting
22. Bearer of the Queen's headdress
23. Bearer of the Phoenix Banner
24. Lady with Coral-tree
25. Bearer of the folded towels
26. Cherub in folds of Queen's robe

CENTRAL GROUP

1. Buddha Maitreya, the coming Buddha
2. Bodhisattva Mañjusrī (Wēn-shu), Lord of Wisdom
3. Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (P'u-hsien), Lord of Highest Intelligence and Goodness
4. Attendant Bodhisattva
5. Attendant Bodhisattva
6. The Young Monk, Ananda
7. The Old Monk, Kāsyapa

8-9. Apsarases, Buddhist angels

RIGHT HAND GROUP

10. King Sankha of Ketumatī receiving the tonsure
11. His eldest son, the Crown Prince
12. A Barber Monk
13. Attendant holding platter for hair
14. Barber's attendant holding cut locks
15. Bearer of a covered reliquary
16. Bearer of the King's headdress
17. Guardian of the North, Vaisravana
18. Guardian of the South, Virūdhaka

CHINESE BUDDHIST FRESCO

"MAITREYA IN KETUMATĪ"

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	Temple Frescoes in China	4
II.	The Buddhist Fresco of Hsing Hua Monastery	6
III.	The Subject: Maitreya in Ketumatī	11
IV.	Identification of Figures in the Fresco	14
V.	Detailed Descriptions:	
	A. Maitreya and Attendants	22
	B. The Tonsuring of King Sankha	25
	C. The Tonsuring of Queen Syamavatī	31

I. TEMPLE FRESCOES IN CHINA

IT has been a custom in China to decorate interior walls of temples with fresco paintings in polychrome. The temple buildings of the Buddhist and Taoist religions usually formed part of monastic foundations, and were under the care of resident monks. The paintings often provided decorative backgrounds for images which were ranged along the walls on pedestals or platforms. In the Confucian temples, which seldom contained images but rather spirit-tablets and accessories for Confucian worship, paintings were less commonly used, and were seldom of artistic worth, their emphasis being wholly centred on some moral teaching of classical lore.

Inner walls of palaces were also decorated with paintings, and Chinese literature points to portraiture as a common theme for such walls from very early times.

Buddhist paintings were usually groupings of Buddhistic personages in what are called *Mandalas* or Paradises, or were depictions of legendary or historical episodes of a Buddhist significance. Taoist paintings naturally reflected Taoist philosophy, and were strongly mythological and astrological.

The art of drawing was said to have been invented in the time of the mythical Yellow Emperor (c. 2700 B.C.), while the Book of History attributes colour painting to the age of the mythical Emperor Shun (c. 2255 B.C.), whose younger sister Lei is alleged to have been the first painter. "Alas", cried a disgusted Chinese critic of later ages, "that this divine art should have been invented by a woman!"

One of the greatest fresco painters was Wu Tao-tzu, who lived in the 8th century A.D., the middle T'ang period. No authen-

tıcated example of Wu's painting is known to exist, but such may appear some day, for dated contemporary paintings have been found in Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein and others. There is no question but that Wu's influence was so great as to fix the composition for frescoes from his time onward, and most of the early temple paintings that remain to-day are considered as in the style of Wu Tao-tzu. Moreover, the majority of these extant frescoes come from the region of southern Shansi and western Honan, which was the area dominated by Wu.

Roofs of Chinese buildings seldom rest on walls, but on wooden pillars and an inter-joined framework of timber; consequently the roofs are frequently completed before the walls are built. This means that inferior material and work may be used in the construction of the walls. The better temple buildings have walls of burnt clay brick, but many are of sun-dried clay brick, built up with mud mortar. After the wall is completed, the rough clay or brick of the interior surface is covered with a mud plaster bound with chopped-up straw, to the depth of about an inch. When this is dry a thin layer of pure lime mortar is spread over the surface, and the fresco is then painted on this smooth surface. It is not known whether in the early frescoes the pigments were mixed with water or water and lime, and applied to the wet lime plaster in the true *fresco* method, or whether the *secco* method was followed and the painting applied to the dry plaster; but probably it was a combination of the two.

Whatever it was, the colours have retained a freshness remarkable after many centuries of exposure, for Chinese temples are draughty and unprotected from dust storms and atmospheric changes. Moreover, little attention is paid to adequate damp-coursing, so that dampness soaking up through the porous bricks or clay plays havoc on the lower part of the frescoes. Then, too, the temple halls were often used for schoolrooms, and the frescoes would suffer from the scribblings of school-boys, as well as of sight-seers, and the general wear and tear from such public uses. Scores of visitors' names are found written on the temple frescoes of the Museum collection.

II. THE BUDDHIST FRESCO OF HSING HUA MONASTERY

This painting, which is the large central one in the Chinese Fresco Gallery on the ground floor of the Museum, is 38 feet, 2 inches long, and 18 feet, 11 inches high. It is known to have come from the Hsing Hua Ssŭ, "Monastery of Joyful Conversion", which is about ten miles south east of Chi-shan in South Shansi (Lat. 35°35′, Long. 111°01′). The monastery is located in the Chi Mountains, a range which forms part of the southern watershed of the Fen River, on which the town of Chi-shan is situated. In the *Chi-shan Hsien Chih*, the official gazetteer of Chi-shan county, the location of Hsing Hua Monastery is recorded and the date of its founding is given as A.D. 592, in the Sui Dynasty.

Chinese temples almost invariably face south, with walled gable ends at the east and west, a verandah and latticed door partition along the whole of the south side, and a wall on the north side. Images were ranged along the north and two end walls, the central part of the north wall being the place of highest importance. This fresco was from the main hall, presumably one of the gable ends. Its companion from the other end was also removed and is said to be in the National University at Peking.

As for the fresco on the north wall, two students, sent by Bishop White in 1938 to investigate, found it still in place but almost defaced by wind and rain, the upper part especially. One could barely make out ten Buddhist figures painted there. They reported that the upper part of the south wall, above the doors and lattice, also had a fresco containing ten Buddhist figures, and that these were still in fair condition.

The Museum fresco is well preserved and practically complete, the only parts lacking being sky sections with cloud design, which, not being germane to the composition itself, were passed over by the persons responsible for removing the painting from its setting. One of the portions of plaster unfortunately left on the wall is said to have borne an inscription giving a date equivalent to either 1298 or 1358 A.D.

In the summer of 1926, Professor Li Chi of Ts'ing Hua University, Peking, visited the monastery, and it was he who first discovered the inscription left behind. This he read, "In the

time Ta Yüan, the *wu-hsü* year, mid-autumn month, the fourteenth day, the work was completed".

It is a fact of historical record that the term "Ta Yüan" (Great Yüan) was not used before 1271, when it was adopted by Kublai Khan as the name of his dynasty. The dynasty came to an end in 1368. Between these two dates there are only two *wu-hsü* years (of the sixty year cycle), one equivalent to 1298, the other to 1358. It is felt that the earlier date is the more probable for our painting in the light of comparison with other frescoes known to have come from this general region, which are identical in style, and which consensus of opinion at present assigns to the early fourteenth century. A closely similar fresco, now in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery, Kansas City, can with considerable confidence be dated around 1319. It is from Kuang Shēng Monastery, some fifty miles north east of Chi-shan. The two frescoes in the University Museum, Philadelphia, are undoubtedly of the same period and the same region.

The two young men who visited the temple in 1938 also copied the date inscription which Professor Li Chi had noted, but they read the cyclical date characters as *ch'ing-shēn*. Now this combination does not exist among the cyclical dates. Dr. Bachhofer[1], however, lightly dismissing Dr. Li Chi's reading, has sought to identify the characters which the students thought they saw, with similar ones which would give acceptable combinations, and at the same time pull the date up into the fourteenth century, preferably to 1320, a year around which he would, apparently, like to group all these similar frescoes. But it should be remembered that Dr. Li is a trained archaeologist, much more likely to be correct in his reading of the inscription than the students. Moreover, Dr. Li visited the temple in 1926, shortly after the frescoes had been removed, and it is reasonable to assume that the inscription was more readable then, than twelve years later in 1938, when, indeed, the students remarked on the ruin wrought by wind and rain upon the north wall next to it.

The inscription contains another piece of important information besides the date, viz: "The drawing and painting was done by

[1]Bachhofer: "Maitreya in Ketumatī, by Chu Hao-ku", *India Antiqua*, Leyden, 1947, pp. 2-4.

the *tai-chao* [title given to a high ranking court painter] Chu Hao-ku, of Hsiang-ling-hsien, and his pupil Chang Po-yüan". These painters are unknown at present, except for this record of them, but future research may bring to light something about Chu, at least, whose name ought to appear somewhere among records of *tai-chao* scholars.

Until more conclusive evidence can be found, the fresco should be considered as of the year 1298 A.D.

From about the year 1920, one of the changes in the thought life of the *literati* took the form of opposition to religion, and this was particularly intensified during the few years preceding 1928 while Soviet advisers were dominating the political field in China. During this time Buddhist and Taoist temples and monasteries were confiscated by the authorities and turned into schools and libraries, museums and barracks, and public institutions of various kinds. It is no wonder that the monks and custodians of the temples, fearing the total loss of their property, should set about to realize on their assets wherever possible. This was the main reason for the removal of the frescoes from the temple walls, and their sale to willing purchasers, invariably Chinese antique dealers, who counted on disposing of them to European and American collectors. Most of the frescoes now in Western museums would have been destroyed if left in China, for the thousands of temples taken over by the authorities were, during that iconoclastic period, denuded of sculptures and frescoes and everything that bespoke religion.

A further compulsion to dispose of temple frescoes lay in the fact that for several years, from 1920 onward, the district of south Shansi had faced severe famine conditions, and the coffers of the monasteries were empty.

In 1923 a syndicate of seven Chinese dealers purchased the Hsing Hua fresco from the custodians. The painted plaster was cut in sections of about two feet square, and these sections carefully pried from the wall. There were 63 sections in all, each about an inch or more in thickness, for the mud base had to be removed bodily. These slabs were stored in a nearby village, where they remained for over four years, as the disturbed condition of the country made it impossible to move them. Finally in 1928, with

no prospect of recovering their full financial outlay, the dealers offered them to the Museum at a reasonable price, and ultimately they were brought to Canada.

Their transportation from the interior of China to the coast was a nightmare, and the young man in charge of this operation had wasted to a skeleton by the time the work was completed. The slabs were packed in some fifty cases, with cotton wool protecting the painted surfaces, and these were then conveyed on mule carts. It took over three weeks to cover the distance to the coast, for bandits and minor war-lords exacted their toll in transit, and civil war operations more than once threatened disaster to the caravan. Finally the port of Tientsin was reached, and there the Chinese Maritime Customs facilitated their shipment. At that time there were no government restrictions on purchase or export of such antiques, but the situation has changed, and it would now be impossible to obtain permission for their export.

After arrival in Canada the frescoes remained in their cases for some time until the best method of permanently setting up such crumbling material could be decided upon. Mr. George L. Stout then of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, who had been experimenting successfully in transferring plaster frescoes such as these, was appealed to for help, and coming to Toronto he directed the work of transfer, which was done by Mr. William Todd and his associates on the staff of the Museum.

The technique employed was to apply a protective film of vinyl-acetate to the pigmented surface, then carefully to pare off the inch or so of clay and lime on the back. Fortunately this was done so thoroughly that the painting itself was reached from the rear, as can be seen from Fig. 11, which shows a photograph of the barber monk from the reverse, (compare with Fig. 9 of the barber from the obverse). This process incidentally revealed re-painting of certain parts. In the barber's face, for instance, the first painting (*see Fig. 11*) showed him looking not at the Emperor's head but straight forward, and since he holds a razor in his hand, the critic probably felt this was a dangerous thing to do, and had the eyes re-painted and looking downwards on the work in hand.

After the background of clay was removed from the pigment,

the latter was permeated with several applications of thinly diluted vinyl-acetate, then gauze or thin canvas was attached to the surface, and this layer was, under pressure, made to adhere to a slab of synthetic millboard. Afterwards these sections of millboard were matched, and screwed to a framework already arranged on the wall of the gallery. This work on the Museum fresco was done in 1933, and after tempering for two years or more the face of the painting was carefully cleaned, bringing it to its present condition.

III. THE SUBJECT: MAITREYA IN KETUMATI

The theme of the painting is purely Buddhist. The general composition follows the form known as a *mandala*, or Paradise scene, which was painted according to strict esoteric rules. In it a group of Buddhist divinities is symmetrically arranged and presided over by a central figure, usually a Buddha. This fresco, strictly speaking, is not a *mandala* but a *pien-hsiang*, a much freer representation which illustrates the text of a *sūtra*. Here the central figure is the Buddha Maitreya, the Future Buddha. But it is not his Paradise that is depicted here. The clue to the subject is given by the two scenes going on at the right and left sides of the picture, where a king on the one hand and a queen on the other are receiving the tonsure, following their conversion to Buddhism.

The whole painting is, in fact, an illustration of those passages in the Maitreya *sūtra*, or scripture, in which is foretold the Future Buddha's descent from the Tusita Heaven to this earth, where he will pick out those who are to be his parents, and shall be born of them and become a Buddha. His parents to be are living in a Kingdom called Ketumatī, and not only does he convert them to Buddhism, but also the ruler of the country, King Sankha, and his Queen, as well. Moreover, each of these persons brings with him 84,000 followers, men, and women, who leave their homes and simultaneously enter holy orders. Many others follow suit.

Five Maitreya *sūtras* are known in Chinese, translated from Sanskrit originals between 303 and 701 A.D. All tell much the same story, "Maitreya coming down to be born and attain Buddhahood", but some give more details than others, and the transliterations of the names into Chinese sometimes differ. It is impossible to tell which of these texts has inspired the Hsing Hua Monastery painting, but a long artistic tradition has been followed which is presented here in a simplified version.

Early known examples of paintings of this subject date from the 7th to the 10th centuries. Five are frescoes in the famous cave temples of Tun-huang, on the border of Central Asia.[1] A

[1]P. Pelliot; *Les Grottes de Touen-houang*, Cave 77, 7th cent. Pls. 154, 156; Cave 144, 8th cent. Pl. 317; Cave 8, 10th cent. Pl. 19; Cave 74, 10th cent. Pl. 138; Cave 117, 10th cent. Pl. 208.

sixth is a fresco at Wan Fo Hsia near Tun-huang.[2] A seventh is a silk votive painting in the Stein collection from Tun-huang, now in the British Museum.[3] At the sides or below the main divinities all show the most elaborate and detailed scenes illustrating many of the incidents mentioned in the texts. Several depict large numbers of persons, obviously of high rank, gathered around a gentleman on the right and a lady on the left, who are having their heads shaved. The style of these scenes is purely Chinese.

In nearly every case there are cartouches beside the principal groups of the story-telling scenes, and these were intended to contain names, or selections from the *sūtra* texts identifying the subjects. Unfortunately the illustrations in Pelliot's publication of the Tun-huang frescoes are too indistinct for us to make out the writing, and the Wan Fo Hsia fresco inscriptions have been obliterated or else the cartouches never were filled. But the inscriptions in the cartouches of the silk painting in the British Museum are clear enough to be read, and they contain the names of the figures beside which they are written, so there can be little doubt as to the identification of these figures. On the right the the important personage who has come on horseback, and is having his head shaved, is labelled King Sankha. The leading lady on the left side, who has arrived in a palanquin, and is also being tonsured, is similarly identified as the Queen, Syāmavatī.

Between the tenth century and our fresco of the end of the thirteenth, no more examples of this subject are at present known. But there can be no doubt that we have here the same theme, although much simplified, and with the narrative scenes most skillfully incorporated into the composition of the painting as a whole. Because of this very simplication and because of the Chinese-looking personages and properties, other identifications of the side scenes have been current. It seems advisable to look again at the texts of the sūtras.

[2]L. Warner; *Buddhist Wall Paintings at Wan Fo Hsia*, Pls. xxx and ff.
[3]Stein; *Serindia*, Pl. LVIII; and *The Thousand Buddhas*, Pl. IX; and A. Waley, *Catalogue of Paintings from Tun-huang*, No. XI, pp. 16-20.

From the *Fo-shuo Mi-lo hsia-shēng ching* (The Sūtra of Buddha telling Maitreya about coming down to be born), translated into Chinese by Dharmaraksa in 303 A.D. (Taishō Edition, sūtra No. 453)

(The past tense is used, although this is, strictly speaking, a book of prophecy.)

"At that time there was a city called Ch'ih-t'ou (Ketumatī), (which extended) east to west 180 miles, and north to south 63 miles. . . .

At that time . . . a King called Hsiang-ch'ia (Sankha) . . . had seven precious things . . . and there were Four great Stores of Treasure. . . .

At this time King Sankha heard that Maitreya had already attained Buddhahood. Then he went where Buddha was and asked to hear about the Law. Then Maitreya gave the King a discourse on the Law. . . . Later, at another time, the great King elevated his eldest son to be King (so that he himself might become a monk). He gave the barber precious stones, and miscellaneous valuables to various *fan-chih* (Brahmacārin, beginning students of Buddhism). He, together with a company of 84,000, went to where Buddha was and begged to be made *sha-men* (Sramana, Buddhist monks). All attained the result of the Buddha-Way and accomplished Arhatship.

At this time Hsiu-fan-ma (Subrahma) was a great Elder. He heard that Maitreya had already accomplished Buddhahood. He and 84,000 *fan-chih* all went to where Buddha was and begged to be made *sha-men*, and attained A-lo-han (the state of Arhatship). But only Hsiu-fan-ma, alone, had three locks of hair cut and thereby brought about an End to Bitterness (i.e. put an end to his circle of reincarnation).

At this time Buddha's mother Fan-ma-yüeh (Brahmavatī) with 84,000 married women, went to where Buddha was and begged to be made *sha-men* (in this case, nuns). All the women attained A-lo-han. But only Brahmavatī, alone, had three locks cut, thus causing her to accomplish *srota-āpanna* (the first stage of the Arhat), . . .

Then every living soul begged to be made a *sha-men* and left home to learn the Way. . . .

At that time Ananda had not yet given up holding onto Experience. . . . Among the Disciples was Mahākāsyapa. . . .

At that time Sankha was the great King. He had a great minister whose name was Subrahma. He and the King in youth had the same tastes and the King loved and respected him. The expression of his countenance was upright and correct. He was not tall nor short, fat nor thin. He was not white nor black nor old nor young. At this time Subrahma had a wife named Brahmavatī. Among (all) the court ladies she was the most beautiful, like the concubine of T'ien Ti (the Emperor of Heaven, or Indra). Her mouth was fragrant like blue lotuses. Her body was fragrant like the red wood of the *Chan* tree. All the ladies, 84,000 of them, lost forever their (haughty) manner. . . .

When Maitreya was a Bodhisattva in Tusita Heaven he looked down to find (suitable) persons to be his father and mother (that they be) not old and not young. (Just as in the case of Sākyamuni) who descended into Māya's womb, and was born from under her right arm, so was it in this case, Maitreya Bodhisattva was born. . . .

After Maitreya Bodhisattva had descended into the world, Hsiu-fan-ma gave his son a name, and called him Maitreya. Maitreya Bodhisattva had 32 major and 80 minor signs. His body was of a golden yellow colour.

At that time men's longevity (will be) endless. . . ."

From the *Fo-shuo Mi-lo hsia-shēng-ch'ēng-fo ching* (The Sūtra of Buddha telling Maitreya how he shall come down to be born and

become a Buddha), translated into Chinese by Kumarajīva in 402 A.D. (Taishō Edition, Sūtra No. 454)

"In that time there will be a great city called Ch'ih-t'ou-mo (Ketumatī) . . . a majestic, wonderful, clean land, full of virtuous people. There abound joy and peace. . . . There will be a powerful Dragon King . . . whose pool will be near the city. The Dragon King's palace will be at the center of the pool . . . the people . . . will live in houses which have bright jewelled pillars, . . . the gardens will be covered with pure gold and not have a speck of ordinary soil. . . .

In this city (of Ketumatī) there will be a great *P'o-lo-men* (Brahmin) lord named Miao Fan (Subrahma?). The Brahmin's wife will be called Fan-ma-po-t'i (Brahmavatī). Then Mi-lo (Maitreya) will be born, using them for his father and mother. His body will be of a golden colour, and with the 32 signs (of greatness). . . .

Then King Hsiang-ch'ia (Sankha) with 84,000 great ministers . . . shall leave home and study the Way, and also with him 84,000 Brahmins . . . King Sankha will have a precious Lady named She-mi-p'o-ti (Syāmavatī). . . . She and her 84,000 beautiful waiting ladies shall all leave their homes. King Sankha (will have) an eldest son named T'ien-sê (Devāsana). . . ."[4]

IV. IDENTIFICATIONS OF FIGURES IN THE FRESCO

As has been indicated, paintings such as this one were made to illustrate the texts of a *sutra*, or sacred scripture. There is no difficulty in identifying the chief figure of this fresco as Maitreya, the Buddha to come, because the distinguishing characteristic is his position, sitting with legs pendant, European fashion. Since other older paintings are known, illustrating the same texts, and one even has the various figures labelled, there would seem to be little question that corresponding figures in this fresco should receive the same identifications. Iconographic rules were rigidly fixed for Buddhist paintings as well as sculptures, and artists were not at liberty to change them. Thus we are justified in identifying the two attendant monks as Ānanda and Kāsyapa, who are mentioned in the Maitreya texts as being present, and the tonsure scenes as those of the king and queen of Ketumatī. There seems little doubt of the *original* names of these figures.

In his early study of the fresco, Bishop W. C. White made the interesting discovery that the local population of the district around Hsing Hua Monastery interpreted the side scenes of this painting as representing the tonsure of two historical Chinese personages of the 6th century A.D., the Emperor Wu Ti of the Liang Dynasty, and Empress Hu of the Northern Wei. The

[4]The translations have been checked by Prof. C. C. Shih of the University of Toronto.

question is, was that the intention of the artist and those who had the fresco painted about 1300 A.D.? Were figures of Liang Wu Ti and the Empress Hu substituted for those of King Sankha and Queen Syāmavatī of the *sūtra* texts?

Liang Wu Ti was emperor of one of the short southern dynasties which had its capital at Nanking. He is famous for his mad devotion to Buddhism, which caused him to neglect his kingly duties and, in 528 A.D., become a monk. He withdrew to the T'ung T'ai Monastery and was recalled to the throne twice before he finally retired in 549. In the meantime, the general disorders of the day brought on the downfall of the Dynasty in 550.

The Empress-dowager Hu of the Northern Wei kingdom, with its capital at Loyang, was also a great promoter of Buddhism, but she was an evil and immoral woman, and from the time in 516 when she was appointed regent for her young son, her personal conduct scandalized the empire. In 528 she murdered the boy emperor, and put a child of three on the throne. Nobles and people rose in rebellion and she had to flee with the child to a nunnery. There she was tonsured and became a nun, but it did not save her. Soldiers seized her and threw her and the child into the Yellow River. It is true that she had done much to advance Buddhism, so that there were more than 200,000 monks and nuns in Northern Wei in her time. But it seems unlikely that her life would be held up as an example to be followed.

In the decline of Buddhism which took place in China in later centuries, it was inevitable that meanings of symbols and scenes should in many instances be forgotten and new interpretations attached to them. But Buddhism was still strong in North China when this fresco was painted, and the Maitreya stories from the *sūtras* still well known, to the priesthood at least. They would have seen to it that the artist held to the tradition in painting this subject, at least for the principal personages. The interpretation of the tonsure scenes by the local populace as representing a Chinese emperor and empress,[1] we must assume to be a comparatively recent development. It is of great importance in the study of the evolution of the Buddhist religion in China. But in the descriptions to follow, we have space to consider only the original meanings.

[1]For details see *Chinese Temple Frescoes*, by W. C. White, Toronto, 1940.

FIGURE 3

Central Group: Buddha Maitreya.

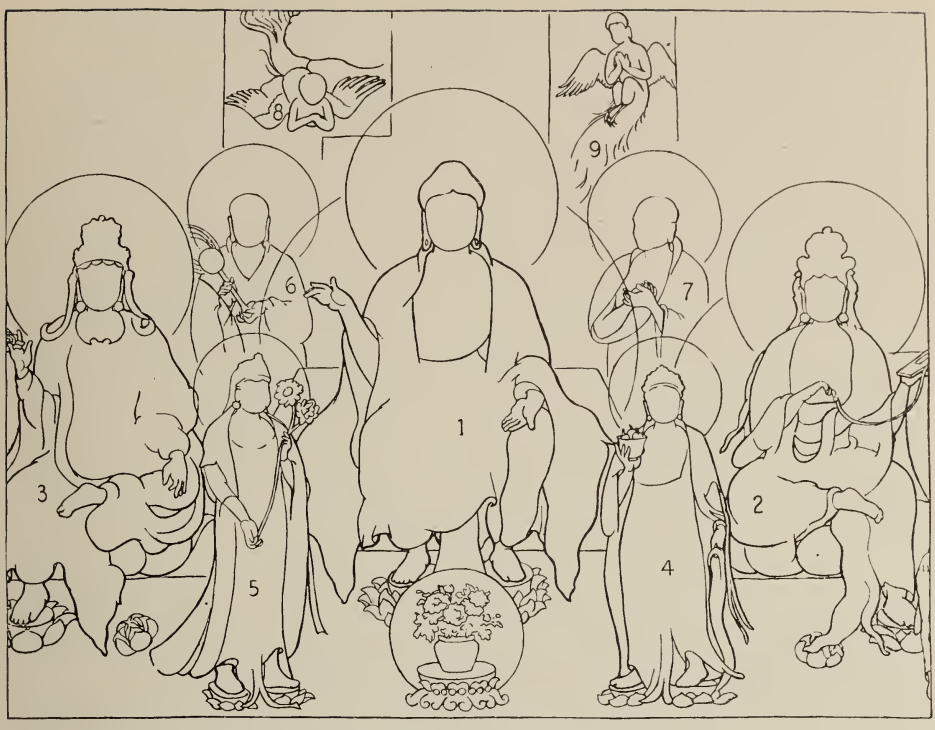


FIGURE 4. *Key to the Central Group*

1. Buddha Maitreya, the coming Buddha.
2. Bodhisattva Mañjusrī (Wēn-shu), Lord of Wisdom.
3. Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (P'u-hsien), Lord of Highest Intelligence and Goodness.
4. Attendant Bodhisattva.
5. Attendant Bodhisattva.
6. The Young Monk, Ananda.
7. The Old Monk, Kāsyapa.

8, 9. Apsarases, Buddhist Angels.

FIGURE 5

Central Group: The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (P'u-hsien), Lord of Highest Intelligence and Goodness.

FIGURE 6

Central Group: The Bodhisattva Mañjusrī (Wēn-shu), Lord of Wisdom.

FIGURE 7

Attendant Bodhisattva standing at the left front of the throne, holding long-stemmed blue lotus flowers. The lotus was the Buddhist symbol of purity. The transparency of the gauze sashes and the delicacy of linear treatment are particularly attractive.

FIGURE 8

Attendant Bodhisattva standing at the right front of the throne, holding a small bowl of Chün ware containing fruit. Though similar in general form to the opposite attendant, the detailed treatment of the latter seems to mark it as the handiwork of another artist.

V. DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

A. Central Group: Buddha Maitreya Enthroned, with Attendants

This central group is composed of nine figures, including Buddha enthroned in the center with a great seated Bodhisattva on each side. At each corner of the Buddha's throne stands an attendant, two graceful Bodhisattvas at the front, two monks behind. High up overhead two winged apsarases, Buddhist angels, hover in prayerful adoration. The three main figures have transparent body haloes and opaque head haloes. The whole company seems to be floating, like a vision, on little puffs of white cloud in the deep midnight blue of Heaven. Lotuses and leaves pushing up through clouds along the bottom of the painting suggest the close proximity of the Kingdom of Ketumatī, on Earth.

It is a dignified and impressive group, perfect in balance, rich in colour, magnificent in line design. All the rhythms are self-contained, all lines leading the eye to the great dominating figure of the Buddha. The whole breathes a spirit of peace and deep contentment. (Figs. 3-8)

1. *Buddha Maitreya: the Coming Buddha*

There are certain points that might suggest Buddha Sakyamuni, but the European posture of sitting compels us to assume that this is the Maitreya, even though the familiar symbols of Maitreya, the flask of ambrosia and the *mudrā* of teaching, are absent. Maitreya is sometimes depicted as a bodhisattva, but in this case as a buddha, even though his attainment of the Bodhi still belongs to the future. This is in keeping with iconographic practice of Northern Buddhism.

He is sitting on a square dais in European fashion, with a lotus-flower under each foot, while in front of him is a transparent halo surrounding a large glass bowl of peony flowers. Peonies were called "Ornaments of Empire", and were emblematic of power and wealth.[1] Here they are laid at the feet of the Buddha in renunciation, perhaps representing the "Seven Precious Things" of the texts. The bowl is of a form common to the Sung Dynasty.

[1]According to Mrs. Hilda Strong, author of *A Sketch of Arts and Crafts of China*, 1933.

Buddha's right hand is extended in the pose known as the *vitarka-mudrā*, the *mudrā* of argument, while his left hand rests palm upwards on his left knee. His breast is bared, and his skin is of a golden colour, which is the seventeenth of the Thirty-two Signs of Greatness. Among other Signs of Greatness are the *ushnīsha*, the protuberance on the skull which is the seat of the intellectual faculties, and the *ūrnā*, the divine eye on the forehead which is the sign of spiritual insight. He is clothed in an outer robe of dark red, an under robe of bright green, and his waist is encircled with what appears to be a rich, brilliantly coloured girdle, but which may be a brocaded border of a garment. (*Fig. 3.*)

This buddha since the 13th century has been depicted also in another form, as a fat, squat, laughing figure with bare belly, which is known popularly as the Laughing Buddha.

2. *Bodhisattva Mañjusrī* (*Wēn-shu*), *the Lord of Wisdom*

Bodhisattvas are of the class of Buddhist saints who have to pass only once more through human life before reaching full Buddhahood. They forgo Buddhaship in order to save mortals, and are usually personifications of certain attributes, such as light, wisdom, mercy, power, and carry symbols illustrating these respective attributes.

This bodhisattva, the Lord of Wisdom, seated on Buddha's left, is characteristically holding a book in his uplifted hand and his right hand holds the jewelled bead at the end of the ribbon which encircled the book. He is seated on a lotus throne, with left leg pendant and foot resting on a lotus support, while the right leg is folded upon the throne. He has the *ūrnā* on his forehead, and the hair of beard and moustache is evident, though the ribbons and jewellery make the figure look feminine. Besides the book, this bodhisattva usually carries a sword, and is seated on a lion. The two latter symbols are absent, but the close-petalled blue lotus-flower at his feet is a recognized attribute of *Mañjusrī*. (*Fig. 6.*)

3. *Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* (*P'u-hsien*), *the Lord of Highest Intelligence and Goodness*

This bodhisattva sits on Buddha's right, in a posture similar to that of the previous figure but with the right leg pendant. The

usual symbols of this deity, a scroll which he holds and an elephant on which he rides, are absent here, but as P'u-hsien is the regular companion of Wēn-shu, we may assume that this identification is correct, especially as the right hand is held in a form of the *vitarka-mudrā*, which is characteristic of this bodhisattva. The left hand rests upon the left knee, palm downward. (*Fig. 5.*)

4. *Attendant Bodhisattva at right front of throne*

This figure is standing on lotus-flower supports and carries in the right hand a bowl containing three apples or peaches. Whether they refer to the peaches of immortality is undetermined. The bowl is of interest, for it is not only of characteristic Sung shape but its colour is that of the typical bluish-lavender Chün glazed pottery ware, and obviously is intended to represent a Chün bowl. (*Fig. 8.*)

5. *Attendant Bodhisattva at left of throne*

This figure stands in a posture similar to the former, but carries two lotus-flowers in the left hand, the lower ends of the stems being supported by the right hand. A noticeable characteristic of this figure is that she is wearing streamers and sashes which are transparent, probably made of thin silk gauze. (*Fig. 7.*)

6 and 7. *Disciples. Ananda the young Monk, and Mahā-Kāsyapa the old Monk, respectively*

These were the disciples and constant companions of Sākyamuni Buddha, but are mentioned in the Maitreya *sūtra* as accompanying the Future Buddha likewise. Ananda, who carries a fly whisk, was very learned and had always been good; Kāsyapa (Mahā merely means "great") was the leader of the ascetics who rejected Buddha at first, but he later became a devoted follower. Thus the one personified natural goodness, the other, evil converted. (*Figs. 3 and 4.*)

8 and 9. *Apsarases, Buddhist angels*

These are beneficent heavenly beings, sometimes of bird-like form, which fly or float among the clouds and are often depicted as dropping flowers from above on Buddhist figures or groups. Both these figures hold their hands in the posture of prayerful adoration. (*Figs. 3 and 4.*)

B. Right Hand Group: The Tonsuring of King Sankha

In this fresco the two scenes of tonsure would appear to be easy to identify from the texts, but actually it is not so simple. This is because there are two couples so important in the story that they can vie with each other for the honour of representing the great hosts of the converted. They are Maitreya Buddha's father and mother, and King Sankha of Ketumatī and his Queen.

In both of the texts quoted above great emphasis is placed on all the treasures and jewels possessed by King Sankha. Maitreya's father and mother, although extolled for their personal qualities, do not hold the center of interest. It is the triumph of converting King Sankha, with all his kingdom and treasures, ministers and followers that thrills the author of the *sūtra*. The King has everything a worldly person could want. Yet it is all renounced for the joy of conversion. Led by the King everyone becomes a monk or a nun—or nearly everyone. Only the Crown Prince must remain in the World, to carry on and be King in his father's stead. In the picture this little Prince is shown already wearing the crown, and weeping because he cannot join his father in taking holy orders.

It must surely be the Queen who is being tonsured in the scene on the other side. If the lady were not the consort of the King, the highest ruler in Ketumatī, the Chinese artist would hardly have displayed an empress's double-phoenix banner behind her.

There seems to be no reason to doubt that the traditional iconography has been followed in this case, and that we have represented here the tonsures of King Sankha and Queen Syāmavatī, just as in the corresponding though more elaborate and spectacular scenes of the labelled painting from Tun Huang. (*Figs. 9 and 12.*)

10. *King Sankha of Ketumatī receiving the Tonsure*

The King is here being tonsured preparatory to leaving the world and entering a monastery. Although Sankha was supposed to be an Indian king, he is characteristically represented here like a Chinese emperor, which was as the Chinese doubtless imagined him. He is seated in a highly decorated chair with a

FIGURE 9

Right Hand Group: The Tonsuring of King Sankha of Ketumatī.

FIGURE 10

Right Hand Group: Key to the Tonsuring of King Sankha

10. King Sankha of Ketumatī receiving the Tonsure.
11. The King's son, Crown Prince Devāsana.
12. A Barber Monk.
13. Attendant of foreign aspect holding platter for hair.
14. Barber's Attendant holding cut locks.
15. Bearer of the covered reliquary.
16. Attendant of foreign aspect holding the Emperor's head-dress.
17. Guardian of the North, Vaisravana.
18. Guardian of the South, Virūdhaka.

FIGURE 11
Detail of Fig. 9, but from the Reverse. The Barber Monk. Note under-pigment painting of the eyes. *(See p. 9)*

circular back, his feet resting on a foot-stool. In his two hands he holds the buddhist rosary (*nien chu*) of 108 beads, which is strikingly similar to the official beads (*ch'ao chu*) worn by Chinese officials down to recent times. His robes are brilliant in red and green colours, and a girdle of inlaid turquoise plaques encircles his waist.

11. *The King's Son, Crown Prince Devāsana*

The small boy stands at his father's right knee, one hand clutching the sleeve of his father's robe, and the other rubbing his eyes, which are closed as if he were weeping. His head-dress and high-legged boots are colourful and striking. At the top of his high cap (his father has evidently already elevated him to be king) may be seen the sacred trident symbolizing the "Three Vehicles" of Buddhism.

12. *A Barber Monk*

It is evident that the artist had difficulty in depicting the barber as looking down and appearing to concentrate on what he was doing. The discovery of under-painting reveals the changes made here in the painting of the eyes (*Fig. 11*). The barber holds a typical Chinese razor, and his own head is tonsured. His clothing is that of a mendicant monk, a yellow robe with dark stripes or borders, covering garments of drab gray. For greater freedom of his right hand the upper yellow robe is thrown from his right shoulder and is draped simply over the left shoulder and arm. (*Figs. 9 and 11.*)

13. *Attendant of foreign aspect holding platter for hair*

Dressed in a green gown, with a peculiar ornament of four straps hanging from his girdle, this man is kneeling on his left knee and holding a platter. This platter is yellow, and of metal form, and probably was either of brass or gold. It contains no hair, and might well be the wash-basin, but a similar platter in the tonsure scene of the Queen actually has strands of hair laid across it.

14. *Barber's attendant holding cut locks*

He wears a short red jacket bordered in yellow and blue, with a large "cloud collar" around his neck. He holds strands of the hair already cut in both hands, and a towel is thrown over his left arm. He is not tonsured. His head is uncovered and his hair is dressed in an unusual fashion, combed straight back.

15. *Bearer of the covered reliquary*

On an occasion of this kind it was usual to prepare a receptacle to contain the hair, and this vessel would be placed in the temple among the holy relics. This vessel, yellow in colour, was probably of brass or gold, and its shape and decorative design harmonize with Sung Dynasty standards. Little can be seen of the garments of this youthful attendant, though it is evident he wears a fur, and his hair is dressed like No. 14's.

16. *Attendant of foreign aspect holding Emperor's head-dress*

This individual is apparently the same type of servant as the attendant who holds the platter for the hair (*No. 13*). The head-dress is resting on a brass or gold platter, which the attendant holds in both hands. It is a high white cap with a sort of jewelled coronet around the bottom.

17. *Guardian of the North, Vaisravana* (*To-wen*)

This military figure clothed in mail-armour and helmeted, is typical of the Four Guardians of the Quarters, known as Lokapalas, called by the Chinese *Ssu Ta T'ien Wang*, the Four Great Heavenly Kings. They are especially guardians of temples, but symbolize also the seasons, the four elements, and the four quarters of the universe. Each has a name, a colour, a symbol, and his respective powers and functions.

It is not fully clear whether this is the Guardian of the North or of the West. But the white bar ascending by his head appears to be the staff of a pike coming up in the crook of his right arm, so that his hands can be held in the peculiar manner shown, with the thumbs together pointing upward. If it is a pike, then this personage is the Guardian of the North and presides over the

season of Winter. His symbols are a pike with banner, or a pearl and snake, and he sometimes carries in his hand a stupa or reliquary. The evidence is in favour of assuming this person to be Vaisravana, the Guardian of the North, especially as his companion is obviously the Guardian of the South.

This same type of mail-armoured guardian was found by Sir Aurel Stein on banners and frescoes from the Tun-huang caves belonging to the 8th century (see *Serindia*, by Sir Aurel Stein). The elaborate and impressive mail-armour will be described on following pages dealing with the Taoist Temple Frescoes.

18. *Guardian of the South, Virūdhaka (Tseng Chang)*

There is no question about this guardian being Virūdhaka, who presides over Summer and the South, for he is holding the umbrella which is his symbol. He sometimes also carries a sword, and is in mail-armour and helmeted. His helmet is said to be made of the skin of a white elephant's head, and the white helmet this particular guardian is wearing is of such a peculiar shape that it might well be the cured skin of the head of a pachyderm.

These two Guardians of North and South should be balanced by the Guardians of East and West among the attendants of the Queen in the corresponding tonsure scene on the left of the fresco. But, so far, they cannot be recognized there.

C. Left Hand Group: The Tonsuring of Queen Syamavati

For the same reasons that are given for the identification of the king in the right hand group as King Sankha, the lady receiving the tonsure on the left side of the picture may confidently be named as the Queen Syāmavatī. She, too, is named in the cartouche of the corresponding scene of the Tun-huang painting in the British Museum.

Dr. Bachhofer has assumed that the lady was Brahmavatī, mother of Maitreya, because "the cherub that can be seen emerging from the folds on the lady's bosom is clearly a hint at the birth of Maitreya."[1] However, this cannot be taken as evidence, for the Empress of Heaven in the Taoist fresco of the Lord of the Southern Dipper has a similar cherub in the folds at her neck

[1]Bachhofer: *India Antiqua*, 1947, p. 6.

(see p. 21, Fig. 13). The fact is that the significance of this ornament is not yet clear. (No. 26)

The most conclusive proof that the lady being tonsured is a Queen, and not just a woman of high caste, is that one of her attendants holds behind her a banner on which are two phoenix birds. In China the phoenix was the symbol of the Empress, the consort of the highest ruler. The presence of this banner makes it practically certain that the lady is Syāmavatī.

19. *Queen Syāmavatī receiving the Tonsure*

The Queen is seated on a throne with circular back similar to that of King Sankha. Her hands are in the attitude of prayerful devotion. The wide sleeves of her robes reach to the ground, and show a feather border decoration, with protective cuff-like folds over the tops of the sleeves which come in contact with the wrists. The shoes of the Queen have turned-up points, each capped with a bird's head, probably a phoenix. She and her ladies-in-waiting all have pasty white complexions, which differentiate them from the two Bodhisattvas in the group.

20. *Celestial Being acting as Barber*

This graceful figure is of Bodhisattva type, with *ūrnā* in her forehead, and the only person in the group with a halo. She is sharpening the razor on the palm of her hand, while in front of her, with the strands of hair laid across it, is the platter, which may have been used as a wash-basin.

21. *Lady in Waiting*

There is little to indicate the function of this attendant. Her upper robe, draped round the shoulders, is of dark blue colour, and her hands are hidden under its folds. In her coiffure the central ornament appears to be a comb, with hair-pins on each side. On the pasty white of her forehead is painted a small trefoil ornament, such as can be seen on the foreheads of court ladies of the scroll, "Women preparing silk" in the Boston Museum, and other earlier paintings.

22. *Bearer of the Queen's head-dress*

This presumably is a maid-in-waiting, for her own head-dress is in general similar to that of the Queen, which is set out on the brass or golden platter she bears.

23. *Bearer of the phoenix banner*

This female is less pretentiously dressed, and so would be of lower rank than the latter. In China the phoenix is the emblem of the Empress, as the dragon is the emblem of the Emperor.

24. *Lady with coral tree*

That this is not a celestial being is shown by the pasty white of the flesh tones which distinguish the women of the narrative scene, and the elaborate court garment and hair-dressing. The ornament on her forehead is a small trefoil, like that worn by No. 21. A rosary is entwined in the branches of the coral-tree. Coral offerings are depicted in the eighth century banners and frescoes found at Tun-huang, and are common in Buddhist paintings.

The position of this figure, and the one next to it, no. 25, correspond to those of the two guardians on the other side of the painting. Here, by all iconographic rules, should stand Virūpāksa (Kuang Mu), the Guardian of the West, and Dhrtarāstra (Ch'i Kuo) the Guardian of the East, completing the set of the Four Deva Kings. The naga-tree or sacred coral, was one of the "Treasures of the Nagas" which were offered to Buddha. Virūpāksa is King of the Nagas. It is a temptation to yield to the suggestion that we have here a female representation of the Guardian of the West. But since the Deva Kings were *always*, so far as yet known, depicted as fierce male warriors, usually in armour, the identification must remain doubtful.

25. *Bearer of the folded towels*

This figure, which, by reason of its position, should be Dhrtarāstra, Guardian of the East, offers a similar problem, although this is a Bodhisattva in the usual headdress and jewels, and without the dead white flesh-tones of the women's figures. The towels are folded and held on a tray on the left hand steadied

FIGURE 12

Left Hand Group: The Tonsuring of Queen Syāmavatī.

FIGURE 13

Left Hand Group: Key to the Tonsuring of Queen Syāmavatī

19. Queen Syāmavatī of Ketumatī receiving the Tonsure.
20. Celestial Being acting as Barber.
21. Lady in Waiting.
22. Bearer of the Queen's head-dress.
23. Bearer of the Phoenix banner.
24. Lady with Coral-tree.
25. Bearer of the folded towels.
26. Cherub in folds of Queen's robe.

by the right. There is nothing to point to the figure being a guardian, rather he seems to be helping the barber.

26. *Cherub in folds of Queen's robe*

This is similar to an apsaras with its bird-like body floating down from the sky. Another of the Museum frescoes has an Empress with the same cherub in the same place on her robe, and she also has the same feather edging on her sleeves (see Empress of Heaven of the Southern Dipper fresco, Fig. 13). The meaning is not known of either of these features. Bishop White feels sure that the cherub would at least "signify some attribute of tenderness or blessing associated with the Empress".

H. E. Fernald
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FIGURE 1. *The Lord of the Northern Dipper.*

LEFT HAND GROUP

1. Chen Wu: Lord of the Northern Dipper
2. Attendant to Chen Wu in Tantri form
3. Tortoise & Snake: Symbols of Chen Wu

4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 — The Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper

CENTRAL GROUP

11. Probably T'ien Huang: Emperor of Heaven
12. Huang Ti: The Yellow Emperor
13. Hou T'u: Empress of Earth
14. Movable Altar with coral offering
15. Attendant: Bearer of Altar
16. Attendant: Bearer of Altar
17. Attendant: Bearer of Banner
18. Attendant: Bearer of Banner
19. Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20. Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner

RIGHT HAND GROUP

21. Chia stem - Wood element - Jupiter
22. Ping stem - Fire element - Mars
23. Wu stem - Earth element - Saturn
24. Kêng stem - Metal element - Venus
25. Jên stem - Water element - Mercury
26. Probably Yih stem - Wood element
27. Probably Ting stem - Fire element
28. Probably Chi stem - Earth element
29. Probably Hsin stem - Metal element
30. Probably Kuei stem - Water element

FIGURE 2. *Key to the Taoist Fresco, Lord of the Northern Dipper.*

FIGURE 3. *The Lord of the Northern Dipper Fresco.*
From a Temple in Southern Shansi. Date about Thirteenth century A.D.

THE LORD OF THE NORTHERN DIPPER

THE procession of this fresco is led by the personage after whom the painting is named, that is Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper. It is an arbitrary application of the name to the fresco, yet a suitable one, for the whole composition is framed on the mythological and astrological ideas which centre in the star group of Ursa Major, known to the Chinese for some three thousand years as the Northern Dipper. It is a great procession, swinging along with rhythm and freedom of action, and yet with co-ordination and quiet dignity, under the energetic leadership of Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*Fig. 1*). He is not the most important person in the group, for the three large-sized Rulers in the centre are the great personages of the procession, nevertheless he dominates the painting, and his vigour and determination are evident in every line of his person.

The composition divides itself readily into three parts. The first, or left-hand group, contains Chên Wu, his six-handed attendant in Tantra form, and the Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper. The second, or central group, is the most important, for it contains Three Rulers, accompanied by their attendants, and preceded by an altar carried by two damsels, on which rests a vessel containing the symbol of the Sacred Coral. The third, or right-hand group, is that of ten personages who represent the Ten Celestial Stems, five of whom are the Five Planetary Deities, and the other five their respective counterparts, thus making five pairs of the Five Elements, wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, which constitute the Ten Stems of the Chinese cyclical system of time.

As in the case of the Buddhist Paradise fresco, the procession appears as a vision in the heavens, floating on the clouds, with a background of the dark-blue of night.

The theme of the painting being Taoist there is nothing of purely Buddhistic symbolism to be found in it, except that which had been appropriated by Taoism, and so became common to

both religions. This applies to the Tantric attendant to Chên Wu, the Altar with its Sacred Coral, the banners of the Empress of Earth, and the Five Planetary Deities (*cp. Fig. 2*). The painting is typically Chinese in character, done in the generally accepted Wu Tao-tzu style). It is in a good state of preservation, there have been no restorations except where the joins of the plaster sections have been re-touched, and the colours have retained their brilliancy and freshness, though mellowed by the passing of the centuries. As to its size, this fresco is 33 feet 6.5 inches in length, and 10 feet 4 inches high.

The costumes of the civil officials in general appear to be as follows:

(1) a full-length white under-garment; (2) a full-length robe, the upper part and lower part of which may be of different colours; (3) a highly decorated apron, usually red in colour, which seems to hang from under the waist girdle; (4) an embroidered or decorated upper robe or mantle with wide, long-flowing sleeves, which sometimes reaches only to the knee; (5) a waist girdle, probably of leather, which may be plain in front, but which often carries rectangular or circular plaques of a decorative nature; (6) a stole, usually wide at the shoulder, which is sometimes festooned over and around the arms and body, in a manner similar to the stoles of Bodhisattvas; (7) what appear to be protective napkins or cuff-protectors on the upper-robe sleeve ends; (8) a highly ornamented cap, held in place by a hat-pin, and thongs; (9) a Long-life Lock (*ch'ang-ming-so*) suspended as a pectoral by thong around the neck; (10) sometimes an official baton or sceptre; (11) the official tablet (*kuei, hu*) held in both hands; (12) shoes, which in most cases are hidden by the long robes; and (13) all are supplied with transparent haloes.

The caps are particularly interesting for no two of them are alike, and yet they are identical in their general characteristics. Each is built up on a circular band, and is studded with gems and decorated with gilt bosses and plaques. It is held on the head by a hat-pin which is thrust horizontally from the right side through the knob of hair under the cap, and then extends on the other side. In

FIGURE 4

The Left-hand Group of the Northern Dipper Fresco.

addition a pair of thongs are attached to the rim at a point forward from the ears, which allows the thongs to be tied under the chin. Some of these thongs were tied and others were hanging loose. There was another tie for the cap which must have been of ceremonial significance. It is a long thong, probably some ten feet or more in length, which passed loosely over the front rim of the cap, then over the hat-pin which protruded on either side, and down over the shoulders and the sides of the body, finally being looped up over the arms. Where this cord passed behind the ear, it threaded a barrel-shaped cylinder, probably of amber, or possibly ivory, which was evidently intended to protect the ear from cutting by the cord. The Empress and Emperors of this fresco carry similar long head-dress thongs and ear-protectors, but the latter are more decorative than those of the Presidents of the Seven Stars. The Ten Stems do not carry ear-protectors, nor do the attendants of this fresco.

The Long-life Lock (*ch'ang-ming-so*) as the name implies is a symbol and amulet of longevity and is suspended on the breast by a thong. It is carried by most of the figures on both Taoist frescoes. It is found on Sung paintings (*Bulletin, Museum of Fine Arts; Boston, October 1937, p. 65: 9*), on wooden temple figures of Chin and early Yüan in the Museum collections, and on illustrations of Yüan Dynasty books (*Hsiao Ching;* A.D. *1308, reprint by Ch'ên Hang, Peking, 1938*). It was very popular during the Ming Dynasty, while it is commonly worn by children today, as a charm protecting from dangers.

The tablet carried by civil officials and by royalty is a symbol of official rank and goes back to very early days. It is a narrow strip of ivory or jade, slightly tapering to one end, the corners of which are slightly rounded or pointed. It is this smaller end which is always held uppermost. Ceremonially the object should be held in both hands, which should be covered. There are two names for the object, that of *kuei*, which possibly refers to the jade or stone types which seem to be mainly for ceremonial use; and that of *hu* which is commonly applied to ivory, wooden, or bamboo tablets. These tablets were held before

the breast by courtiers at audiences, even down to the Ming Dynasty. They are said to have been used for taking notes, either those of matters to be reported to the Emperor, or to record the words of the Emperor. Such tablets, with the records still on them, were kept as heirlooms in the families of those officials who had used them (*cp. Shosoin; Harada, p. 21*).

The sceptre or baton carried by each of the Emperors is fastened in the girdle under the left arm, and appears to be from two to three feet long. The handle is studded with gems, and the object itself obviously was of ceremonial significance only. Besides the Emperors only three other figures appear to carry such sceptres, and they are among the Presidents of the Heavens, which follow immediately after the Lord of the Southern Dipper, in the second Taoist fresco.

A. Left-Hand Group

1. Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper. This short, stout, and competent-looking warrior who leads the procession is known by many names. His most imposing name is the First Ruler of the Sombre Heavens (*Hsüan T'ien Shang Ti*). Other names are the True Warrior (*Chên Wu*), the Protector of Goodness and True Master of the North Pole (*Pei-chi Yu-shêng Chên-chün*), the Sombre King (*Hsüan Wang*), and the Sombre Warrior (*Hsüan Wu*). In the year 1012 the use of the character *hsüan*, in the name of an ancestor of the Emperor Chên Tsung, necessitated the taboo of that character in ordinary use, and so the name Hsüan Wu was changed to Chên Wu. There are other names he is known by, and in the Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1416) a temple in his honour was built at Peking, where he was worshipped under the title of Veritable Saintly and Helpful Master of the Pole Star. Later generations called him True Master (*Chên Chün*), placing at the feet of his image a tortoise and serpent.

His origin is wrapt in a fog of myth and legend. He is said to have been an incarnation of the Taoist god who was the First Principle (*Yüan-shih T'ien-tsun*), and that a patriarch of the Third Heaven descended to earth and taught him the wonderful doctrine, bestowing on him a magic sword. On a high peak of Mount T'ai-ho he practised for forty-two years the exercises which brought

him the ability to float in the air, and to perform feats which made him invincible. The First Principle hearing of this invited him to ascend to the celestial regions. This was in the time of Shou, the last King of the Shang Dynasty (1123 B.C.), when the demon-kings were ravishing the universe. So Hsüan T'ien was despatched to earth at the head of the twelve great chiefs of the celestial legions. He came with dishevelled hair, bare-footed, girdled with a gold cuirass, clothed in a black mantle, carrying his magic sword, and hoisting a dark banner on which was a plotting of the Northern Dipper. He joined battle with the king of the demons at the Grotto of Darkness (*Tung-yin*), and capturing him and his demon hordes he threw them into the Feng-tu abyss, the entrance to the nether regions in Ssu-ch'uan. In the conflict two of the marshals of the demon-king were transformed into a grey tortoise and a huge serpent in order to deceive Hsüan T'ien, but all to no avail,—and since then the tortoise and snake have been associated with the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*Fig. 1*). In the official History of the Sung Dynasty (*Sung-shih, bk. 463, p. 9*) there is a curious entry recording the appearance of Hsüan T'ien Shang Ti, in a vision to the Emperor Hui Tsung (A.D. 1101-1126) of the Sung Dynasty. The Emperor who was an artist and a scholar, became a zealous adherent of Taoism, and was greatly influenced by the Taoist Lin Ling-su.

As the story goes, the Emperor one day told Lin that he would like to see Chên Wu's sacred person. "To obtain this favour," said Lin, "Your Majesty must summon to the palace along with me the Master of Heaven" (*T'ien Shih*—the pontiff of Taoism). This was consequently done, and

at the moment when these two were performing their rites at midnight, the sky darkened. Lightning suddenly rent the skies, the thunder rolled, and in a blaze of light there dropped at the threshold of the palace a grey tortoise and a serpent. The Emperor prostrated himself, then offered incense and prayed "I desire to see Chên Wu, if he but deign to reveal himself." The thunder crashed—the tortoise and serpent vanished—and a huge foot appeared on the threshold. The Emperor made a second prostration, and offered incense, begging Chên Wu to condescend to show himself more manifestly. That moment he saw standing before him the huge figure of a man some ten feet high; his face was stern and striking; his hair was unbound; under his

black mantle which had sleeves sweeping to the ground, he wore a breastplate of gold and a belt set with jewels; his hand brandished a sword; his feet were bare, and round his head there shone a halo of light, while the ends of his sash floated in the breeze. He remained long enough for the Emperor to sketch him and then vanished [*cp. Chinese Superstitions; Doré, vol.* IX, *pp. 20-26*].

The description of Chên Wu as given in the Sung History is a picture of Chên Wu of the Toronto fresco. The armour of this Sombre Warrior is particularly interesting, because it is identical with that of the warriors of the ninth-century Tun-huang paintings, with additional interest from the fact that his arm-guards and greaves are surfaced in a very naturalistic manner to simulate shagreen.

His coat-of-mail is of the diaper-design of three-armed stars, yellow in colour, and it is trimmed with green and gem-studded decoration. The under-tunic is white, the over-mantle is black with a green-lined red border, while the long floating stole is green. At the knees are what appear to be red trousers with black edging, fastened below the knee with a decorative garter. The greaves and arm-guards are of similar design and colour, and are of blue shagreen, decorated in applique with discs and gems. At the ankles are petalled ruffs, but his feet are bare. Behind his head is a transparent halo, he is bareheaded and his hair is flowing wildly, he wears a yellow-plaqued belt at the hip, and a plain grey belt at the waist, while his R. hand grasps a drawn straight-edged sword, with the index finger hooked over the cross-bar of the guard (*Fig. 1*).

2. The attendant to Chên Wu is probably a Tantric form of Vaiśravana (*To Wên*), the Guardian of the North, and the double-halberd he carries, with the long streamer attached to it, is probably the "Banner of Victory." He is a fierce-looking warrior, with three faces and six arms. His hair flares out fan-shape like the hairs of a thick brush, and flames of fire curl up from the ends. He is in full mail-armour, and carries an object of symbolic significance in each of his six hands. His upper right hand holds on the tip of his forefinger a whirling wheel (*cakra*) from which flames ascend; his central right hand holds a drawn sword pointed upwards; and the lower right hand holds a double-headed halberd resting across the right shoulder. His upper left hand holds a carpenter's square, one arm of which is graduated into ten inches to form a carpenter's foot-rule; the central left hand holds a coiled lasso; and the lower

FIGURE 5

Altar of the Coral Symbol.

left hand holds a seal with a pair of lucky characters carved on it. This character (*fu*) is one of the twelve ornaments on the robes of an Emperor.

This Tantra attendant has a fiery red face with wide-open mouth and fanged teeth. Over his forehead is an ornament with two up-turned horns, and on each side of the head, where the ears should be, is a smaller red-faced demon head. His hair flares out, and from the ends are curling flames of fire. His coat-of-mail appears to be of leather elaborately decorated with applique designs, and with oblong armour plates on the shoulders. He has a sporran-like monster-mask at the waist, with a red belt above it, and another yellow-plaque belt below it. All six arms have ruffs of feathers at the elbow, with arm-guards of oblong plates. His leg-greave has a shagreen decoration, and blue ruff is at the ankle. He wears shoes with white heel-cap, red toe-cap, a red tie under the instep, and a decorative shield over the instep. His robe under the coat-of-mail is blue, his under-tunic is white, while his knees are swathed in white drapery which is fastened with knee-garters. His stole, which is green with a yellow lining, is festooned about his body. A streamer is attached to the head of his halberd, which makes it appear to be a "Banner of Victory" of Vaiśravana. His straight-edged sword, held vertically in his centre R. hand, is hardly noticeable by the edge of the fresco. The tip of his halberd, which is two-pronged, is also not discernible.

3. The tortoise and snake are emblems associated with Chên Wu. As pointed out above they are said to have been transformations of two marshals who in conflict with Chên Wu changed themselves into a grey tortoise and a huge snake respectively, but were finally conquered, and so are usually depicted at or under the foot of Chên Wu.

4-10. The Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper. Each has his distinctive Chinese name (*Chinese Reader's Manual; Mayers, Shanghai, 1924, p. 352*), and a particular function in the affairs of men. In the star group of The Northern Dipper the fourth, fifth, and sixth stars, counting from the star nearest to Polaris, are the stars which govern respectively long life, happiness, and plenty. Their depictions in the fresco are dressed in the full flowing robes of Chinese civil officials of ancient times, and they all have transparent head haloes and carry official tablets, but there is no distinguishing feature by which any one of them might be associated with a particular star.

These seven figures all have the same light-coloured complexion of face, and they do not carry a sceptre or baton, in which respects they differ from the nine figures at the head of the procession of the Southern Dipper fresco. The mantles of this group are all dark in colour, characteristic of the northern regions, but some have coloured edgings. Their robes and stoles are of different colours, but otherwise their costumes are similar in kind and design.

B. Central Group

This group includes three important personages; two are Emperors and one is an Empress. They are preceded by two damsels carrying an altar upon which rests a platter containing a Sacred Coral tree. This altar and its offering are in honour of this important trio of dignitaries. Immediately following the altar and preceding the Emperors are two beautifully-gowned girls, each carrying a banner with streamers, sometimes spoken of as a ceremonial umbrella. Then come the Emperors followed by the Empress of Earth. The Empress is attended by two girls bearing banners of a rectangular shape, depicting a sea in which is an island, and on the island is set a palace which radiates rays of light, while the red sun and white moon are seen in the sky on either side.

The three regal figures are obviously a trinity, but it is difficult to determine which they are except in the case of the Empress. She has in her head-dress a disc on which are three broken lines, which is the Fu Hsi Eight Diagram (*Pa Kua*) symbol for earth (*k'un*), so she may with certainty be accepted as the Empress of Earth (*Hou T'u*). The other two, by process of reasoning, and comparison with other mythological personages, have been accepted tentatively as the Emperor of Heaven (*T'ien Huang*) in the case of one, and in the case of the other as the Yellow Emperor (*Huang Ti*). Additional evidence of the probability of these designations is afforded by a Sung painting which bears a cartouche in which is written the caption "Portraits of the Emperor of Heaven, Empress of Earth (*T'u*), and Earthly (*Ti*) Emperor" (*T'ien Huang, Hou T'u, Ti Huang Hsiang*). This painting depicts two Emperors and one Empress in a setting, dress, and style identical with those of the fresco (*Pageant of Chinese Painting; Otsuka*

Kogeisha, Tokyo, 1936, Pl. 211). The Japanese caption by the side of this painting states it to be a drawing of "heavenly spirits and earthly deities," made in the style of Wu Tao-tzu, and at the bottom attributes it to an unknown Sung painter, and calls it "Painting of the Emperor of Heaven and the Empress of Earth."

Although Chinese mythology speaks of thirteen Heavenly Emperors (*T'ien Huang*), all brothers, yet in paintings one figure is usually given as symbolic of the group. In the same manner there were eleven Earthly Emperors (*Ti Huang*), and nine Human Emperors (*Jên Huang*). The one who stands out above all others as the founder of the Chinese polity and civilization, is the Yellow Emperor (*Huang Ti*). Amongst many inventions and institutions, he is credited with correcting the calendar, and with introducing the cyclical system. As the cycle is intimately involved in the lay-out of thē fresco compositions, it is but reasonable to expect that the author of the cycle would be included in the group of imperial personages. So in this group we assume the three regal individuals to be T'ien Huang, Huang Ti, and Hou T'u (*cp. History of the Three Emperors in Ancient China; Ku Chieh-kang and Yang Hsien-kuei, Harvard-Yenching, 1936*).

11. T'ieng Huang, the Emperor of Heaven. The head of the family of fabulous sovereigns, who succeeded P'an Ku the first created being, and who began the process of developing the universe out of chaos.

He wears a white under-tunic, a long robe of pea-green colour, and an over-mantle of blue with a floral border, fastened under the R. arm in kimona-style. Over this is a green stole with yellow lining. Over the front of the robe, hanging down from a red belt at the waist, is a red apron-like garment, down the centre of which are two streamers of a decorative sash, with a ring and knot fastening in the middle. The sleeves of his mantle are wide and voluminous, reaching below the knees, and over the sleeve ends there are the usual green cuff-protectors. The mantle and robe together are decorated with the Twelve Ornaments (*See Bulletin 14*).

In the Book of History (*bk.* IV, *Yi and Chi, chap.* I: *4. Cp. Legge's translation*), the Emperor Shun (2317-2208 B.C.) made this statement to his Minister Yü, "I wish to see the emblematic figures of the ancients,—the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the dragons, and the pheasants, which are depicted

此圖は天神地祇を畫がいたもの、衣服の描法は極めて流暢で、而も古厚の趣があり、その作風は吳道子に淵源し、唐の元和の年號ある普照寺の畫像と酷だ相似たる所がある。

FIGURE 6

Sung Painting of T'ien Huang, Hou T'u, and Huang Ti.

FIGURE 7

Key to Sung Painting of the Three Rulers.

SUNG PAINTING OF THE THREE RULERS

This painting by an unknown artist is accepted in Japan as of the Sung period (*Pageant of Chinese Painting; Otsuka Kogeisha, Tokyo, 1936*), but no year date is suggested. The cartouche in the upper left-hand corner gives the names of the Three Rulers as T'ien Huang, Huang Ti, and Hou T'u. The latter is wearing the robes of an Empress, and behind her are two banners, one is the Empress's banner with the phoenix emblems, and on the other is depicted a sea, an island with a palace on it, the sun (*jih*) and moon (*yüeh*) in the sky, as well as star groups, including the Northern and Southern Dippers. The other two rulers are wearing royal robes, with mortar-board caps on which are depicted sun and moon, and which are adorned with fringes of gems. At least two of the rulers wear the barrel-shaped ear-protectors with long cords, and they all carry the tablet. Their robes are identical with those of regal figures of the two Taoist frescoes. They are accompanied by two officials, at least two damsel attendants, and by a fierce-looking Tantra warrior carrying a ceremonial umbrella-banner. The background is dark sky with floating clouds.

Explanation of the Key

1. T'ien Huang—the Emperor of Heaven.
2. Huang Ti—the Yellow Emperor.
3. Hou T'u—the Empress of Earth, with two damsel attendants.
4. The Two Banners of Hou T'u.
5. The Two Civil Officials.
6. Tantra Warrior, bearing Ceremonial Banner.
7. Cartouche giving Caption of the Painting.

FIGURE 8

T'ien Huang and Huang Ti of the Northern Dipper.

(on the upper mantle); the libation-cups, the pond-weed, the fire, the rice, the axe, the talisman, which are embroidered (on the lower robe)."

The ceremonial robes of the Emperor had all these twelve figures depicted or embroidered on them, emblematic of various attributes, but now for the most part unknown. The highest nobles were restricted from the use of the first three—the sun, moon, and stars—and the other ranks of officials in descending order were decreasingly restricted as to the number of emblems they could use. There were five sets of official robes, one set to each of five grades, and the main difference was in the number of emblems allowed to the particular grade. The first numbers were of the highest rank, gradually decreasing in grade to the twelfth, the talisman, which was the lowest in the scale and the lowest on the garments.

On the robe of the Emperor of Heaven two talisman emblems are seen at the bottom, one on each side, just above the shoes. On the mantle the stars are seen near the shoulder, but the sun and moon are not discernible. The mountains, dragons, and pheasants are clearly seen, and also the flames of fire, and the tiger of one of the libation cups. The latter are usually depicted with a tiger on or inside one, and a monkey on or inside the other. In the case of both the frescoes the cups themselves are not drawn, but only the tiger and the monkey. It is not clear what these two animals are intended to signify, but they may possibly refer to two kinds of libation wine, one associated with the strength and ferocity of the tiger, and the other associated with the cleverness and agility of the monkey. The other emblems—rice, pond-weed, and axe—are not seen on the mantle, but they are probably on the robe below, hidden in the folds of drapery.

The cap of the Emperor is similar to that of the civil officials of the fresco, except that it has a mortar-board top, with a tie passing over it and down the sides of the body to the ground. The top of the mortar-board has a depiction of a red sun at one end and a white moon at the other; and twelve strings of beads, ten in each string and probably of five colours, hang down from the board, front and back.

The cap is held on the head by a cap-pin thrust through the sides, and by leather thongs which are tied under the chin. A long cord also passes over the front of the cap, over the ends of the pin and down behind the ears to the sides of the body, where it is looped over the arms. Behind the ears it passes through a barrel-shaped object which protects the ear from abrasion by the cord. On his breast he wears a pectoral of "Long-life Lock" design, green in colour, like that of the civil officials, and also carries the usual green tablet, but the hands are not covered.

Under his left arm may be seen the head of a sceptre, square in shape and of open-work, for the red of the belt may be seen through it, and its top is surmounted by a round green jade knob.

His shoes have red up-turned tips, and under the tips a small piece of decoration is seen, but most of the shoes is hidden under the robes.

12. Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor. He is said to have invented wheeled vehicles, armour, ships, pottery, etc., and to have regulated the sacrificial and religious ceremonies. He applied the science of astronomy to chronological reckoning, and introduced a calendar and the cycle, while he is credited with originating most of the institutions which form the background of Chinese social, political, and religious life. He is usually worshipped as the God of Architecture.

This Emperor is in robes identical with the previous one, the difference being only in the colours of the robes and in small details. The red apron of this Emperor has a wide fringe at the bottom, and his stole is red lined with green. As to the Twelve Ornaments, his robe has at the bottom the talisman and axe emblems, and on his mantle the other emblems such as are seen on the robes of the previous Emperor, with the addition possibly of the sun. His sceptre under his left arm is not square at the head, but round, and its whole length would appear to be about two feet. Both Emperors are full-bearded.

13. Hou T'u, the Empress of Earth. She is depicted in female form because the earth is *yin* or female, in apposition to heaven which is *yang* or male. Hou T'u is known as the Spirit of the Earth (*T'u Shên*), the patron deity of the soil (*Shê*), the Spirit of Humanity (*Jên Shên*), the Mother of the Earth (*Hou T'u Niang Niang*), and many other names. Sacrifices to Earth were officially begun in 113 B.C. when the Emperor Wu Ti offered sacrifices to Hou T'u in the very area from which these frescoes came, the region of the Fên River. Doubtless sacrifices to Earth were made long before this, for they had to do with agriculture, and seasonal harvests.

This Empress wears a white inner garment; a robe of light colour, with wide green fringe at the bottom; a white mantle with brown edging and floral border in which phoenixes are prominent, and with green lining to the border. She has the usual cuff-protectors, and the wide full sleeves of her mantle have an edging of blue feathers. She wears a red frontal drape similar to an apron, with sash ties down the front, and carries the official tablet in both hands, which are covered with white drapery. Her stole is of pea-green colour with dark-green centre, and lined with a lighter green. Her head-dress is built up of green, gold, and red, with bird forms, and in the centre is a round white disc with the Pa-kua emblem of the three broken lines—*k'un*, which

FIGURE 9

The Empress of Earth of the Northern Dipper.

represents "earth." A jewelled pin is thrust through the head-dress, around which a cord is passed to come behind the ears through ear-protectors, falling down by the sides of the body, and then is looped over the arms. In addition leather thongs are attached in front of the ears for the purpose of tying under the chin, but the ends are allowed to hang loose. The shoes are hidden under drapery at the bottom of the robe, but what is seen shows that the up-turned toes were of bird or fowl-head design. Across the breast there is a lunar-shaped pectoral of gold and jade, which may be part of an ornamental system similar to that of the Bodhisattvas of the Maitreya fresco.

14. The Movable Altar with Coral Offering. The altar itself is well made of wood which is stained green, and the surface appears to be inlaid with white marble. The altar-frontal is placed cross-wise over the centre of the altar, in the manner shown in the Tun-huang paintings. The platter on the altar is mottled, and may well be intended to represent the mottled and glazed pottery so characteristic of the T'ang period. The Naga-tree or sacred coral is symbolic of the "Treasures of the Nagas," and is here significant of the honour being done to the royal personages.

The altar-frontal is bright red, with small floral sprays, checkered in regular order by a delicate blue linear floral design. The frontal is rectangular in shape, and has a border of varied green medallion design on a polychrome background.

15. A female attendant, bearer of the altar.

This young damsel wears a white under-tunic, and a plain white over-robe with blue border, which is crossed over and fastened under the L. arm. Her hair is parted in the middle, and is probably arranged in a double coil behind. The two rosette-shaped ornaments in the hair are the ends of decorative hair-pins, with jade tips. Her hands by which she holds the altar, are covered with the sleeve ends of her robe.

16. A female attendant, bearer of the altar.

This other altar-bearer is also probably a young girl, for her hair is arranged in a style similar to that of her companion.

Her robe is doubtless the same shape, but it is seen from the back. It is light green in colour, with a decorative polychrome border, and has panels of red and green hanging from the side. She wears a yellow belt at the waist, which has a white kerchief inserted under it behind, from which hang down two ends of a white sash which is tied in a bow at the centre.

17. A female attendant, a beautiful well-dressed maid who carries a ceremonial umbrella, or canopied banner, with streamers.

She wears a white under-tunic, a green robe with decorative border, and a white over-mantle with floral border. She has two waist girdles, a red one above, and a green one with square plaques below. Her stole is white, and underneath it is a sort of green and gold corslet which may be the upper part of a system of ornaments which in the case of the Bodhisattvas is suspended over the front of the robes. Connected with this decorative harness are dark-coloured streamers which flow down from the shoulder. At her wrists are green cuff-protectors, and round the wide sleeve of the mantle, or probably at the elbow, there is a pointed fringe of feather decoration. Over the front of her robe she wears a red apron-like garment, with wide green fringe at the bottom. She carries, on a decorated staff, a ceremonial umbrella, the dominant colours of which are white, red, and green.

18. A female attendant, bearer of canopied banner similar to the latter.

She is robed like her companion, but the colours are different. Her robe is white, with a red apron or flap in front, and her over-mantle is also white, with a floral border lined with green. She wears a red corslet, elaborately decorated with green ornaments, which is fastened across the breast and under the L. arm; and from the shoulder there hang down slender streamers of a drab colour lined with light green.

19. Female attendant to the Empress, bearer of a "Paradise" banner. Without much exaggeration this banner could be considered as suggesting a small "Paradise of Kuan-yin"—the palace which radiates rays of light representing Kuan-yin who must be supposed to be within her palace, and Kuan-yin's peculiar symbols, the sun and the moon, which are placed in the heavens on either side of the palace. On the other hand since this is a Taoist fresco, the banner probably gives a picture of a Taoist heaven or retreat, the "Island of the Blest" usually associated with Lao-tzu.

On banners with similar pictures from Tun-huang, the sun sometimes has a red bird—the three-legged solar crow—within its circle; and the moon has a hare standing under a tree, and pounding a pestle in a mortar. In the Sung Dynasty painting of the Three Emperors, there is a banner behind the figure of the Empress of Earth, which has the same picture as

FIGURE 10

The Five Planetary Deities of the Northern Dipper.

this, but since it is a painting on silk more detail is given. In the two circles there are written the characters for sun (*jih*) and moon (*yüeh*) respectively; and in the sky below them are depicted the star groups of the Southern Dipper and the Northern Dipper, and above the palace two groups of the "Three Stars."

The attendant wears a white under-tunic, green over-mantle with dark border, simple ring bracelets, and the usual green cuff-protectors. The banner she carries is rectangular in form with clipped corners, and the staff is continuous through the centre to the top of the banner. The pole is white, decorated with green circles. On the banner is depicted a sea, in which is an island, on which stands a palace. From this palace emanate white rays which radiate fan-shape into the heavens. In the sky to the right is the red sun, and to the left the white moon.

20. Female attendant to the Empress, carrying a banner similar to the latter.

This bearer of the second banner is robed like her companion, and carries a similar banner, but her robes are of different colours. She wears a white robe with a pink border, and her mantle is green. Under a yellow-plaqued belt a white kerchief is tucked in at the back, and from it hang down two red and one drab-coloured sash streamers, with bows in the centre. Her hair is arranged with parting in a double coil, and her two hair-pins have bright red jewels at the top, instead of the usual green jade tips.

C. Right-Hand Group

These ten figures represent the Ten Celestial Stems of the Chinese cycle. Five of them are in the character of the Five Planetary Deities (*cp. Figs. 11 and 12*), and the other five are their counterparts according to the Five Elements, and these wear the robes of civil officials. The five elements are wood, fire, earth, metal, water, and in the Cycle of the Stems there are two of each, so that each pair would include a planetary deity and a civil official. It is not entirely certain which official should be associated with what particular planet, but since the elements have their distinctive colours, the complexion of the officials may be somewhat of a guide to their associations (*Fig. 13*). All the ten have transparent haloes, but only the five officials carry tablets. These latter are dressed in a similar manner to the leading group of the Seven Stars, except that they have no ties to their caps, and do not carry thongs

with ear protectors, though they also wear "Lock" pectorals, and cuff-protectors.

In a banner now in the British Museum, which was obtained by Sir Aurel Stein from Tun-huang, and which is dated A.D. 897, a depiction of Buddha on a chariot is given, accompanied by the Five Planetary Deities. The cartouche in the upper left-hand corner gives the date and the subject of the painting. The figures there given are identical with the Five Planetary Deities of this fresco, and it is remarkable that there should be such close similarity of costumes, attributes, forms, and details, with a period of some 350 years intervening (*Figs. 11 and 12; cp. Fig. 10*).

21. The planetary deity Jupiter, who is the *chia* stem, the first of the ten, whose element is wood, and whose colour is green. He carries a platter of peaches, and holds a peach branch with one peach on it in his right hand. He ordinarily would have a boar's head in his head-dress, but this is missing (*cp. Figs. 12 and 10*).

He wears a white under-tunic, a bronze-coloured robe with plain yellow border, a green over-mantle, and a stole of green with dark centre and yellow lining. Over his robe in front is a red apron with white decorative band down the centre, and he has green cuff-protectors at the wrists. He wears a green belt, and also an upper breast belt of red. His shoe has a red up-turned point at the toe. His complexion is pink, and he has a long thin beard. His tiara-like cap is held on by a hat-pin, and there are no cap ties or thongs. He holds in his L. hand a plate of peaches, and in his R. hand one peach (*cp. Fig. 12*).

22. The planetary deity Mars, who is the *ping* stem, the third of the ten, whose element is fire, and whose colour is red. He carries an uplifted sword, fire comes from his uplifted left index finger, and in his head-dress is a conventionalized horse-head.

In his R. hand he carries a straight-edged sword pointing upward, with index finger over the cross-bar of the guard. His L. hand is lifted up and from the pointed index finger flames of fire curl upwards. He wears a cap, with hat-pin, and a stylized horse-head is in its centre (*cp. Fig. 12*). He wears a white under-tunic, a dark green robe, a red over-mantle lined with blue, a long red stole, and a green belt. His arm-guards have oblong plates overlapping upwards, and probably his leg-greaves would be similar, but they are not visible.

23. The planetary deity Saturn, who is the *wu* stem, the fifth of the

FIGURE 11

Banner from Tun-huang. Now in the British Museum. Buddha and the Five Planetary Deities. Date A.D. 897.

FIGURE 12

Key to the Banner of the Five Planetary Deities.

THE BANNER OF THE FIVE PLANETARY DEITIES

This small polychrome painting on silk, a little over two feet in height, was obtained from Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein, and is now in the British Museum (*Serindia, Pl.* LXXI; *ch.* LIV: *007, p. 1059*).

In a cartouche in the upper left-hand corner, is an inscription in Chinese, which gives the date as the fourth year of the period Ch'ien Ning, which is A.D. 897, and states that the Buddha seated on the chariot is attended by the Five Planetary Deities.

Explanation of the Key

1. Buddha Tejahprabha, seated on a chariot drawn by an ox, with altar, banners, and canopy, and rays of blue, green, and crimson radiating from his person.

2. Jupiter. As a bearded official, bearing in his hands a platter of fruit, and with a boar's head depicted over his head-dress (*cp. Fig. 10*).

3. Mars. A demonic figure with fiery hair and grotesque features. He is four-armed, and carries in R. hand arrow and sword, and in L. hand a trident. Above his head is a small blue horse-head (*cp. Fig. 10*).

4. Saturn. In the guise of an Indian pilgrim, carrying a ringed staff, such as Ti-tsang carries, and with the outline of a small ox-head above and behind his hair-knob (*cp. Fig. 10*).

5. Venus. In female form, playing upon a large lute with a very long plectrum expanding at the striking end in shape of fan. A similar plectrum, 8 inches long and made of crimson ivory, is among the T'ang objects of the Shosoin collection (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, vol. I, Pl. 44*). Above the head-dress of this figure is the form of a phoenix or other bird (*cp. Fig. 10*).

6. Mercury. In female form, with right hand holding a writing brush, and left hand carrying a writing tablet. In the centre of the large head-dress is the figure of a monkey (*cp. Fig. 10*).

7. The cartouche, with caption and date, equivalent to A.D. 897.

FIGURE 13

The Five Associates of the Celestial Stems.

ten, whose element is earth, and whose colour is yellow. He carries a pilgrim's staff, is shod with sandals, a small book-like object is in his right hand, and an ox-head is in the front of his head-dress. His mantle is lined with white fur having dark spots, suggestive of ermine.

He is depicted as an aged pilgrim (*cp. Fig. 10: 4*). In his L. hand he holds a gnarled staff. He wears sandals, which are probably made of straw. His under-tunic is white, his robe is brown with a blue border, and a cape of grey, lined with white fur and extending over the head like a "wind hood" (*fêng mao*), seems to take the place of a mantle. There are two green streamers down the front of his robe, and he wears green cuff-protectors. An ox-head design is in the centre of his head-dress.

24. The planetary deity Venus, who is the *kêng* stem, the seventh of the ten, whose element is metal, and whose colour is white. She is in female form and carries a lute, covered with a cloth which has a star-pattern design, while in her head-dress there is a bird or fowl. She is thus the Goddess of Music, as well as of Spring, which conception may be due to western influences.

She is dressed as a female, with an elaborate bird-design head ornament, and carries a lute, wrapped in a red cloth with stellar designs of "Three Star" groups (*Fig. 10; cp. Fig. 12: 5*). She wears a white under-tunic, a white robe with blue decorative border, a red apron in front, and a feathered fringe decorates the sleeves. Her hands are covered by drapery.

25. The planetary deity Mercury, who is the *jên* stem, the ninth of the ten, whose element is water, and whose colour is black. She is in female form, and carries a writing-brush in her right hand and a paper writing scroll in her left, while in her head-dress there is the figure of a monkey. In China, as in the West, Mercury is the messenger of the gods, and this might well be due to influence from the West.

She wears the customary white under-tunic, a black robe which is bordered with red, a white mantle with a ruff at the elbow, green cuff-protectors, and simple bracelets (*Fig. 10; cp. Fig. 12: 6*).

26. Civil official, probably representing the *yih* or second stem of the ten, whose element is wood, for he is the associate of Jupiter.

He wears a white tunic, a tan-coloured robe edged with blue, a red mantle, and a pea-green stole with dark-green centre. He carries a tablet, wears a "Long-life Lock" pectoral, green cuff-protectors, and a pink belt.

27. Civil official, probably representing the *ting* or fourth stem, whose element is fire, and who is associated with Mars, which is why his face is dark.

His mantle is blue, with yellow border lined with white, and his stole, green with a yellow lining, is draped round his waist. He wears a red apron, a red belt, his cap is mostly white, and his face is dark brown in colour.

28. Civil official, probably representing the *chi* stem, the sixth of the ten, whose element is earth, and who is associated with Saturn.

He wears a white mantle bordered with black, a red stole, and a red belt. His complexion is a dark tan colour.

29. Civil official, probably representing the *hsin* or eighth stem, whose element is metal, and whose associate is Venus.

His mantle is black bordered with pink; his stole is green with a dark centre, and he wears a red apron and a red belt. His shoes have a large red upturned point at the toe.

30. Civil official, probably representing the *kuei* or tenth stem of the cycle, whose element is water, and whose associate is Mercury.

He wears a green robe, and a yellow mantle with a dark floral border. His belt is green, and a white kerchief is tucked under it behind, over which a white sash, with bow in the centre, hangs down to the ground.

W. C. W.

BULLETIN OF
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM
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FIGURE 1. *The Empress of Heaven.*

LEFT HAND GROUP

22. President of the Horse Year
23. President of the Goat Year
24. President of the Monkey Year
25. President of the Cock Year
26. President of the Pig Year
27. President of the Snake Year
28. President of the Tiger Year
29. President of the Dragon Year
30. President of the Rat Year
31. President of the Ox Year
32. President of the Hare Year
33. President of the Dog Year

CENTRAL GROUP

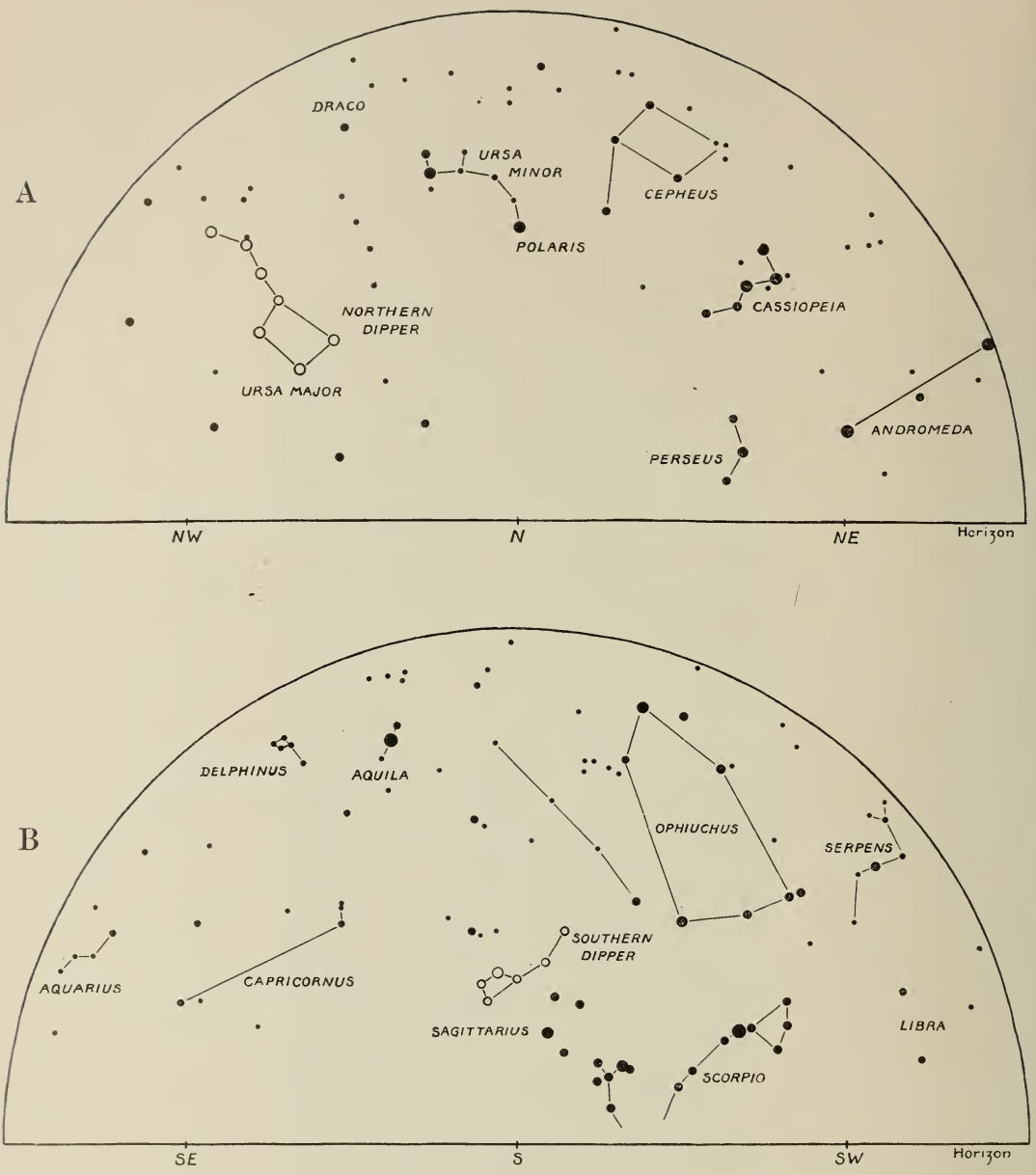
12. Lao Tzu, - the Old Philosopher
13. Yu Huang Shang Ti, - the Jade Emperor
14. T'ien Hou - Empress of Heaven
15. Celestial Cherub in Empress' Robe
16. Movable Altar with offering of Flowers
17. Attendant: Bearer of Altar
18. Attendant: Bearer of Altar
19. Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20. Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Banner
21. Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Fan

RIGHT HAND GROUP

1. Lord of the Southern Dipper
2. Attendant in Tantri form
3. President of the Central Heaven, - Yellow
4. President of the Eastern Heaven, - Green
5. President of the Northeast Heaven, - White
6. President of the Northern Heaven, - White
7. President of the Northwest Heaven, - White
8. President of the Western Heaven, - Red
9. President of the Southwest Heaven, - Black
10. President of the Southern Heaven, - Purple
11. President of the Southeast Heaven, - Dark Green

FIGURE 2. *Key to the Taoist Fresco, Lord of the Southern Dipper.*

FIGURE 3. *The Lord of the Southern Dipper Fresco.*
From a Temple in Southern Shansi. Date about Thirteenth century A.D.



Star Maps for Temperate Latitudes in the North Hemisphere, showing (A) the Northern Dipper and (B) the Southern Dipper.

A–Northern Sky at 9 p m August 15th, 10 p m August 1st
B–Southern Sky at 9 p m August 15th, 10 p m August 1st

FIGURE 4

THE LORD OF THE SOUTHERN DIPPER

THIS fresco is also processional, like that of the Lord of the Northern Dipper, with which it forms a pair. Both frescoes must have been on opposite walls of a temple hall, with the two processions leading up to an important central point of a third wall. There would probably be a fresco on this third wall, with a symmetrical composition, and doubtless an important Taoist trinity of figures would be standing before it. As the other fresco is led by the Lord of the Northern Dipper who controls death, so this fresco is led by a similar figure, the Lord of the Southern Dipper, who controls life. He also is a stout, energetic, and determined warrior, and he is robed and equipped in similar manner to the other, but he has no characteristic emblem associated with him.

This composition also divides itself readily into three parts. The first, or right-hand group, contains the leader of the procession, his four-handed attendant in Tantra form, and a group of nine persons who wear the garb of civil officials, and whom we assume to be the Presidents of the Nine Taoist Heavens. The second, or central group, is the most important, for in it are three great personages, Lao Tzu the founder of Taoism, Yü Huang the Jade Emperor, and the Empress of Heaven. These three are preceded by an altar carried by two young girls, on which is placed a glass bowl containing flowers. The third or left-hand group, is that of twelve persons in civilian official robes who represent the Twelve Animals of the years. They are the Twelve Terrestrial Branches of the cyclical system, which being co-ordinated with the Ten Heavenly Stems, form the Chinese cycle of time (*Fig. 15*). The costumes of civil officials in general, such as are depicted in both these Taoist frescoes, are described in the previous Bulletin.

As in the case of the companion fresco, this painting also is a vision of mythological worthies, intricately involved in the life issues which concern human beings, who move forward in stately

procession on banks of white clouds which float in the deep-blue sky of night.

The Southern Dipper, which is the star group after which this fresco is named, is what is known as the Milk Dipper and by the Chinese as the Dipper Station (*Tou Hsü*), the eighth of the Twenty-eight Constellations or Stellar Mansions. These are divided into four quadrants of seven Stations each, whereof the first quadrant is that of the Azure Dragon on the East, the second that of the Sombre Warrior on the North, the third that of the White Tiger on the West, and the fourth that of the Vermilion Bird on the South. Each of these includes seven of the Constellations, and the Dipper is the first of the second or northern quadrant. The Dipper itself consists of six stars (*Fig. 19*), which are but a part of the constellation known to the West as Sagittarius, the Archer. The fact that the attendant of the Lord of the Southern Dipper carries a bow and arrows, must be taken as accidental, and is not to be thought of as purposely linking the Chinese Dipper with the Western conception of the constellation of the Archer. It is possible that the attendant of the Lord of the Southern Dipper may be the Guardian of the South, Tsêng Chang, whose symbol is sometimes a bow and two arrows (*cp. Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, Tokyo, vol.* XI, *Pl. 13*), though a bow and arrow is also associated with the Guardian of the East.

It is a fact worth noting that no ear-rings are worn by any individual in this picture, and that no ear-lobe has been pierced for ear-rings. All the figures except the Tantra attendant and the female attendants have head haloes, those of Lao Tzu, Yü Huang, and T'ien Hou being opaque, the others transparent.

This fresco is in good condition; it has apparently been retouched only at the joins of the sections, and the colours have well retained their freshness. It measures 34 feet 1 inch in length, and 10 feet 5 inches high.

A. The Right-Hand Group

1. The Lord of the Southern Dipper. The Southern Dipper, *Nan Tou*, as described above, is mentioned in the Book of Odes nearly three thousand years ago, and down through the centuries

RIGHT HAND GROUP

1. Lord of the Southern Dipper
2. Attendant in Tantri form
3. President of the Central Heaven, -Yellow
4. President of the Eastern Heaven, -Green
5. President of the Northeast Heaven, -White
6. President of the Northern Heaven, -White
7. President of the Northwest Heaven, -White
8. President of the Western Heaven, - Red
9. President of the Southwest Heaven, -Black
10. President of the Southern Heaven, -Purple
11. President of the Southeast Heaven, -Dark Green

FIGURE 5

Key to the Right-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

FIGURE 6

The Right-hand Group (1) of the Southern Dipper.

it has occupied an important place in Chinese mythology and astrology. As usual in China, the natural phenomenon was personified, so that the idea of a Spirit or Lord of the Dipper was popularly accepted and acted upon. In the Northern Dipper a great hero like Wu Chên was found to personify it, but in regard to the Southern Dipper, although the idea and the name of the Spirit that controls the star group were generally accepted, there seems to be nothing that associates the leader with actions of an important historical nature. One myth that concerns him is that his mother was the Dipper Mother (*Tou Mu*), and that there were nine sons who were known as the nine Human Emperors (*Jên Huang*), and among these were the Lords of the Northern and Southern Dippers (*Chinese Superstitions; Doré, Shanghai, 1931, vol.* IX, *p. 107*). In form he is depicted very like Chên Wu of the Northern Dipper, with the same kind of robes, and likewise holding a drawn sword, but there is no characteristic emblem associated with him.

The upper part of his corslet seems to be of tan-coloured leather with a triple-line design, and with green applique decoration. The lower part of the garment reaches almost to the knee, and is of the diaper-design type of three-armed stars, decorated with red and green at the bottom, and fringed with a pointed feather edging. His arm-guards and leg-greaves are of the same material as the corslet. He is barefooted, and at the ankles there are blue ruffs which are attached to the bottom of the greaves. He wears a white under-tunic, and a green mantle with plain black border, fastened under the right arm, with a flap-like extension of the mantle falling in front. His belt is decorated with golden ornaments, and from it there hangs a white sash, knotted in the centre, and opening out as it falls to the ground. His stole is pea-green in colour with a bronze-green centre and a white lining. It is draped over his left shoulder and about his body, but it has slipped down from his right or sword-arm. There is white drapery swathed over his legs and fastened at the knee with jewelled clasps. Behind his head is a transparent halo, he is bareheaded and his hair is dishevelled, and he holds in his right hand a drawn straight-edged sword (*Fig. 6*).

2. Attendant in Tantra form. As pointed out above, this may be the Guardian of the South. In the Shosoin, among the objects of the eighth century A.D., there are lacquered cabinet panels on which are paintings of religious subjects, among which there is one of a Guardian of the South in Tantra form, who carries a bow and

FIGURE 7

Detail from Right-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

two arrows, and is in mail-armour similar to this Tantra attendant of the fresco (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, Tokyo, vol.* XI, *Pl. 13*). The attendant is four-armed, and has two faces. He carries a pair of swords, crossed above his head, in his upper hands, and a bow and two arrows in the lower hands. His armour is according to the general description given previously.

This figure has four arms, and is double-headed. His larger head has a dark face, and closed mouth with two fangs showing. The smaller head, also dark in face but with open mouth, is immediately above the larger. From these two heads the hair flares out like a bushy mop, and from it flames of fire curl upwards. His corslet is complicated with gem-studded plaques, but on the shoulders are decorated plates of scale armour. The skirt of the garment shows the same kind of plates, as well as a simpler scale on a flap in front, which falls from a red and gold hip-belt. At the breast there appears to be another belt, from which a light-coloured sporran-like object is suspended just above the hip-belt. From the latter there hang white sash streamer-ends, which are tied with a bow in the centre. The four arm-guards and the two leg-greaves show armour of oblong plates, with a blue and gold applique decoration. He wears a white under-tunic, and a blue mantle or robe lined with bronze-green. His stole, which is long and slender, is red with white lining. At the four elbows there are ruffs of a blue colour, and at the ankles are blue ruffs which may be of feathers. The knees are draped in white, and the shoes have a white heel-cap, red toe-cap, yellow socks, and a protective shield over the instep. In his two upper hands he wields two straight-edged swords which are crossed; and his two lower hands hold a composite bow with an arrow laid across it, while another arrow by his right hand is probably sticking out of an unseen arrow case (*Figs. 6 and 7*).

3 to 11. The Presidents of the Nine Heavens or Mansions. These nine figures in official robes are probably the Presidents of the Nine Heavens. They are also known as the Nine Fields of Heaven, and are considered to be the Nine Divisions of the Celestial Sphere. They are recognized by both Buddhists and Taoists, and are conceived of as successive gradations of heavenly spheres from lower to higher. They have also to do with the eight points of the compass, with the addition of a ninth for the centre, and each has a colour designation.

3. The President of the Central Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Yellow.

FIGURE 8

The Right-hand Group (2) of the Southern Dipper.

He wears a white tunic, a red robe with a plain blue border lined green, and a green stole with a blue centre. His cap is mainly of white, red, black and gold colours, held on by a hat-pin, and by thongs tied under the chin, and a long cord with ear-protectors behind the ears. He carries a sceptre under his left arm, and holds a tablet in both hands which are covered by a red cloth, which may be part of the sleeve of his red robe. He wears the usual green cuff-protectors, and the "Lock" pectoral suspended on his breast.

4. The President of the Eastern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Green.

He is robed similarly to the previous figure, except that his robe is green, and his mantle is white with green border. His stole is green with a bronze centre, and he wears a red belt. He does not appear to have a sceptre.

5. The President of the North-east Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

This figure is bowing towards the altar, so his back only is seen. He wears a green robe, a red mantle with decorative panels hanging from a red belt, and his stole is light green.

6. The President of the Northern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

He wears a blue mantle, and a green stole with bronze centre. From a red belt hangs a decorative red panel. He does not have chin ties to his cap, which all the others have.

7. The President of the North-west Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

He wears a green robe, a white mantle with decorative green border, and a blue stole with grey centre. He wears a red belt, and a red apron frontal.

8. The President of the Western Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Red.

His robe is black with a yellow border. His stole is red with a green lining. He wears a red belt, and carries a sceptre under his left arm.

9. The President of the South-west Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Black.

He wears a blue robe with red apron, and a white mantle with green border. His stole is of bronze colour, with a blue border lined yellow. He also carries a sceptre under his left arm.

Only three of these officials carry sceptres, though all have the tablets and pectorals.

10. The President of the Southern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Purple.

This figure is standing sideways by the altar. He wears a green robe with red side-panels, and his white mantle is edged with a decorative border. His stole is green with light-green lining.

11. The President of the South-east Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Dark Green.

He wears a green robe, a blue mantle with white border, and a green stole with dark centre.

B. Central Group

This group contains three important personages—Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, the Jade Emperor, and the Empress of Heaven. They are preceded by two girls carrying a movable altar on which is an offering of flowers in a glass bowl. There is also a young woman attendant who carries a ceremonial banner, and two young girl attendants to the Empress, who carry a banner and a feathered fan respectively.

12. Lao Tzu—the Old Philosopher—was born in 604 B.C., and was senior contemporary of Confucius, but the date and place of his death are unknown. His native place was in the modern Honan, and he was keeper of the archives at Lo-yang, the capital of the Chou Dynasty, where he is said to have been visited by Confucius. He is generally considered to have been the founder of the Taoist religion, but that system actually was in existence before his time. He is said also to have been the author of the Tao-Tê-Ching, one of the early works dealing with Taoist philosophy, but this is not now attributed to him. Legends of many kinds have been woven about his name, and by Taoists he is worshipped as the first of their Trinity. P'an Ku, the Taoist creator of the universe, and

CENTRAL GROUP

11. Probably T'ien Huang: Emperor of Heaven
12. Huang Ti : The Yellow Emperor
13. Hou T'u : Empress of Earth
14. Movable Altar with coral offering
15. Attendant : Bearer of Altar
16. Attendant : Bearer of Altar
17. Attendant : Bearer of Banner
18. Attendant : Bearer of Banner
19. Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20. Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner

FIGURE 9

Key to the Central Group of the Northern Dipper.

FIGURE 10

Altar of the Floral Offering of the Southern Dipper.

the Jade Emperor (*Yü Huang Shang Ti*) being the other members usually associated with Lao Tzu in this Trinity. Lao Tzu professed to have found the solution of all things human and divine in his interpretation of *Tao*, the WAY; but his chief claim to immortality is based on his doctrine of Inaction: "Do nothing, and all things will be done!"

As a sect Taoism has been a strong rival of Buddhism, though for that matter Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, the so-called Three Religions of China, have all at times been rivals and have had their common experiences of popularity and eclipse.

He wears a white under-tunic, a light-yellow robe edged with blue and lined with green, a red apron frontal over which hangs a cream panel decorated with green and red, and narrow blue streamers flow from the belt at front. His mantle is green with a decorative border, and on each shoulder is a sun and moon respectively, floating in clouds, while on the sides of the mantle are mountains also set in clouds, which may be symbolic of the Taoist "Isles of the Blest," whence Lao Tzu is supposed to have come. He wears a plain red belt, under which appears a second belt decorated with yellow plaques. He wears a pectoral of "Lock" design, carries the tablet in his two hands, which are uncovered, and his sleeves are equipped with green cuff-protectors. It is customary for Taoist teachers to wear their hair done up in a knob at the top of the head, which apparently is the case in this figure, but the knob here is covered with an ornamented and jade-studded knob-cap, which has a single cap-pin at the top, but has no retaining thongs or ties. The shoes he wears have large red up-turned points, and the body of the shoe would appear to be decorated.

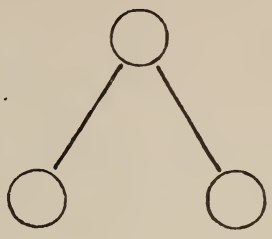
13. The Jade Emperor (*Yü Huang Shang Ti*) is reckoned by Taoists to be the Supreme Lord of the physical world, and the saviour of mankind. Actually he does not go back very early in Chinese history, but was brought into being by the Sung Emperor Chên Tsung (A.D. 998-1023), who to pacify the people, announced with great pomp that he was in direct communication with the gods of heaven. In the autumn of 1012 he called his ministers together and told of a visit from an immortal who had brought a letter from Yü Huang. In 1013 the Emperor had a statue made of Yü Huang and placed in the Palace of Pure Jade (*Yü Ch'ing Kung*), and worshipped it with all his court. Two years later the Emperor conferred on him high-sounding titles, such as the "Grand

FIGURE 11

Lao Tzu and the Jade Emperor of the Southern Dipper.
Graffito from Right Sleeve of Jade Emperor, giving date A.D. 1065.

1. SUN

2. MOON



3. STARS

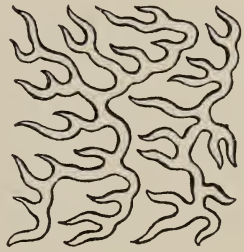
4 MOUNTAIN

5 DRAGONS

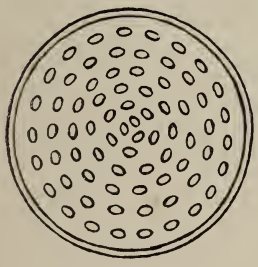
6. PHEASANT

7. LIBATION CUPS

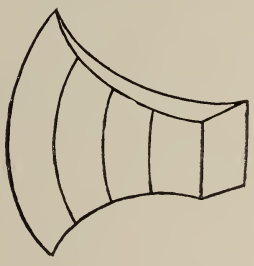
8. POND-WEED



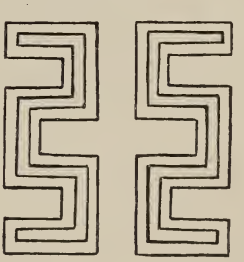
9. FIRE



10. RICE



11. AXE



12. TALISMAN

THE TWELVE ORNAMENTS

FIGURE 12

Sovereign of Heaven." In A.D. 1115 another Emperor, Hui Tsung, had a magnificent temple constructed in his honour, and he was granted the right to wear the robe of an Emperor—which is as he is depicted in this fresco. Orders were also issued for temples to be built to him all over the empire and statues of him cast. The highest title, Shang Ti, was conferred on him by this Emperor, thus putting him on the level with Shang Ti, the Supreme Sovereign of the Confucian scholars. From that time Yü Huang became the most popular god of the people, and for them generally he was God. He was thought of as a personal ruler, who had his court, palace, and ministers, and received delegations from other gods as his subordinates (*see Chinese Superstitions, Doré, vol.* IX, *pp. 9-16*).

The Jade Emperor, who was only given imperial rank in A.D. 1115, wears the full imperial robes similar to those of the Heavenly Emperor and the Yellow Emperor of the other fresco. The emblems of the Twelve Ornaments (*Fig. 12*) are depicted, and at least six different ones may be distinguished. They differ in form and position from the emblems on the robes of the other two Emperors,—the libation cups themselves are omitted, but in their place are pictures of the monkey and the tiger which are usually drawn *on*, or depicted as if they were *inside*, the respective cup. The talisman emblem in this case is on the red frontal of the mantle, and not on the robe. He wears a white tunic, a green robe, and a red mantle with decorative blue border, lined with green. His stole is blue, lined with white. He carries a tablet in his hands, a jewelled sceptre on his left side, has a pectoral, and cuff-protectors, and wears a red belt. His head-dress has a mortar-board top with bead fringes front and back, and ties and thongs and ear-protectors such as those of the other two Emperors. His shoes also have the large red up-turned points.

14. T'ien Hou, the Empress of Heaven. There is an Empress of Heaven who is known as the Heavenly Mother (*T'ien Mu*), the Heavenly Concubine (*T'ien Fei*), and also as the Dipper Mother (*Tou Mu*). The worship of this Empress of Heaven sprang up suddenly at the end of the eleventh century, and developed with great rapidity in the twelfth century. She is the goddess of sailors under the name Holy Mother of the Heavens (*T'ien Shang Shêng Mu*), and is very popular along the coast from Hangchow southward to Canton (*Asiatic Mythology; Maspero, London, 1932, pp. 329-331*). The Empress of Heaven of the fresco is another mythological person of a much earlier period. The historian Ssu-ma

FIGURE 13

The Empress of Heaven of the Southern Dipper.

Ch'ien relates that the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti, "established his power by causing the descent from heaven of the Drought, who was his own daughter, and who remained a goddess" (*Chinese Civilization; Granet, London, 1930, p. 10*). So she is the daughter of the Yellow Emperor and is worshipped as the Goddess of Drought. This has to do with the harvests, so that her function in the processes of human life is similar to that of the Empress of Earth, the corresponding figure on the other fresco, who is the Goddess of the Soil.

She wears a white tunic, a white robe with blue edging, a white mantle with blue decorative border lined with green, and a blue and green stole, lined with white. She seems also to wear an elaborate cape of white, blue, and gold with applique of ornaments and gems, though this may be a part of the mantle. At her elbows there is an edging of feathered fringe (*Figs. 13 and 14*), which may be a feathered decoration similar to that of the attendant on her right. From a red belt hangs a red apron-like frontal with green fringe, over which hang streamers of white. She wears an elaborate head-dress with bird-like ornaments, but there is no disc with the "heaven" symbol. Its thongs for tying are hanging loose, and there is no long cord with ear-protectors. Her hands, which are uncovered, hold the tablet, and green cuff-protectors hang over the wrists. Her shoes have red phoenix-heads on the up-turned points.

15. The celestial cherub in the Empress of Heaven's right bosom is probably a decorative emblem on the garment. The upper half of the body is that of a little child, the lower half being that of a bird, similar to the celestial cherubs on the Maitreya fresco. The cherub holds in its hand a lotus flower—which probably brings it into the group of Apsaras, one of whose functions is to drop flowers as blessings on deities, or those favoured by the gods. There is a similar cherub in the bosom drapery of Empress Hu of the Buddhist fresco.

16. The movable altar is similar to that of the Lord of the Northern Dipper, but there is no frontal laid upon it, and the sacred offering is seen to be a glass bowl with two kinds of flowers in it. One of the flowers is the small paeony which flowers in the spring, and the other is probably a camellia sprig, or a flowering branch of the tea plant, which belongs to the Camellia family and also flowers in the spring.

FIGURE 14

Detail from Central Group of the Southern Dipper.

LEFT HAND GROUP

22. President of the Horse Year
23. President of the Goat Year
24. President of the Monkey Year
25. President of the Cock Year
26. President of the Pig Year
27. President of the Snake Year
28. President of the Tiger Year
29. President of the Dragon Year
30. President of the Rat Year
31. President of the Ox Year
32. President of the Hare Year
33. President of the Dog Year

FIGURE 15

Key to the Left-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

FIGURE 16

Animals of the Years (1) of the Southern Dipper.

The altar is of wood, green in colour, with carved cloud design on the legs, and its surface inlaid probably with white marble. The glass bowl is transparent and of greenish tinge, and has a foot-rim which flares outward. The paeony flowers are white with thick green foliage; and the other spray is of a small-leafed plant with single white flowers, which is doubtless the tea plant in flower. It was during the T'ang Dynasty that the "Tea Classic" (*Ch'a Ching*) was written, and the tea plant at that time was highly respected in connection with ceremonial observances.

17 and 18. Female attendants—the two bearers of the altar.

The outside attendant wears a white robe, a white mantle with blue decorative border lined with green, and a white stole. She wears a red belt with golden plaques, from which a red frontal hangs down, over which fall white streamers. She has green cuff-protectors, and wears simple bracelets. Only the top of the head and face of the inside attendant are seen, and a small piece of her green robe. The hair of both is arranged like that of the two altar-bearers in the other Taoist fresco.

19. A female attendant bearing banner or ceremonial umbrella.

The banner is of green and red, with gem-studded decorative fringe, and with four slender knotted streamers. The staff is white, with green-coloured circle designs. The attendant is wearing a green and gold pectoral, with shoulder ornaments, and has a red belt. She has several hair-pins in her hair, and wears a green tiara. Her clothing is an under-tunic of white, a bronze mantle with green border, and a white stole, while she also wears simple bracelets.

20. A female attendant bearing ceremonial banner.

She wears a white robe with red frontal, a green mantle with yellow border, a red belt, and green cuff-protectors. The banner she carries is red with a green fringe, and is draped round with a white streamer. The design on the banner is a green dragon in the clouds chasing the white sun-pearl, and because of this it may not be the Empress's banner, but the Emperor's, which would carry a dragon. The Empress's banner ordinarily would have a phoenix.

21. The bearer of the Empress's ceremonial feathered fan.

This beautiful young attendant of the Empress carries a graceful feathered fan; and on her own robes she wears a wide feathered trimming at the elbow and side. The Empress herself seems to have the same sort of feather decoration. The fan, which is of white feathers, is gracefully shaped in alignment

FIGURE 17

Animals of the Years (2) of the Southern Dipper.

with the circle of the halo. She wears a white robe, a white mantle with decorated blue border, a red belt with golden plaques from which hang a kerchief and sash at the back, and has a white stole over her shoulders. The arrangement of the hair, with its jewel-tipped hair-pins, is like that of the other female attendants (*Fig. 13*).

C. The Left-Hand Group

This group includes the twelve Presidents of the Years, each designated by a cyclical character of the Twelve Terrestrial Branches, and carries the name of an animal, which is seen in some form on the respective person. All are dressed in civil official robes, and carry official tablets, "Long-life Lock" pectorals, and cuff-protectors; and wear caps which with some exceptions are equipped with chin ties, ear-protectors, and long cords. With two exceptions each carries in his head-dress the depiction of the animal he represents, the exceptions being No. 33, where the "dog" is at his feet, and No. 32 who carries the "hare" in his arms (*Figs. 17 and 18*).

22. The President of the Horse year—the Branch cycle character *Tzu*.

He wears a white tunic, red mantle with floral border, and a green stole with dark centre lined with yellow.

23. The President of the Goat year—the Branch cycle character *Ch'ou*.

He wears a brown robe, blue mantle with pink border, and a light-green stole with dark-green centre.

24. The President of the Monkey year—the Branch cycle character *Yin*.

His mantle is white with a blue border, and his stole is green.

25. The President of the Cock year—the Branch cycle character *Mao*.

He wears a blue mantle with a brown edging, and his stole is red.

26. The President of the Pig year—the Branch cycle character *Ch'ên*.

FIGURE 18

Detail of the Animals of the Years.

Head-Dresses show, Left to right: Rat, Dragon, Ox, and Snake.

His mantle is white with a green border, and his stole is green.

27. The President of the Snake year—the Branch cycle character *Ssu.*

He wears a white mantle with blue border, and wears a green stole.

28. The President of the Tiger year—the Branch cycle character *Wu.*

His robe is green, his mantle green with a yellow border, and his stole blue.

29. The President of the Dragon year—the Branch cycle character *Wei.*

His mantle is green with a white border, and his stole is green.

30. The President of the Rat year—the Branch cycle character *Shên.*

He wears a green robe, a white mantle with a blue border, and a blue and green stole.

31. The President of the Ox year—the Branch cycle character *Yu.*

His robe is green, he wears a white mantle with brown border, and his stole is red.

32. The President of the Hare year—the Branch cycle character *Hsü.*

He wears a green robe, a yellow mantle with a blue border, and a green stole. His belt is red with gold plaques, from which hang red streamers and a white kerchief behind.

33. The President of the Dog year—the Branch cycle character *Hai.*

His robe is green, his mantle blue with a yellow border, and his stole green with a dark centre.

W. C. W.

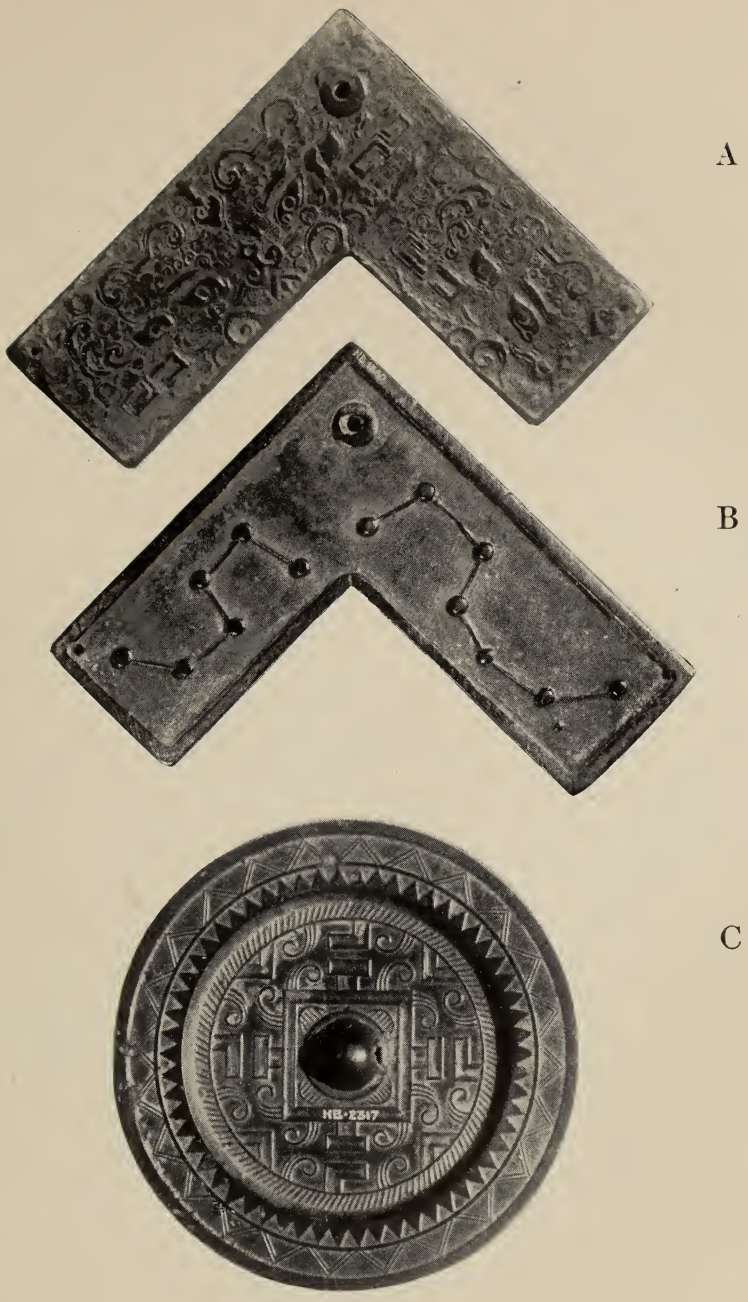


FIGURE 19

Ancient Bronze Dipper Symbol.

A. Obverse. B. Reverse—showing the Two Dippers. Royal Ontario Museum.

C. Ancient Bronze Mirror, showing Sun-dial and Cloud Markings.

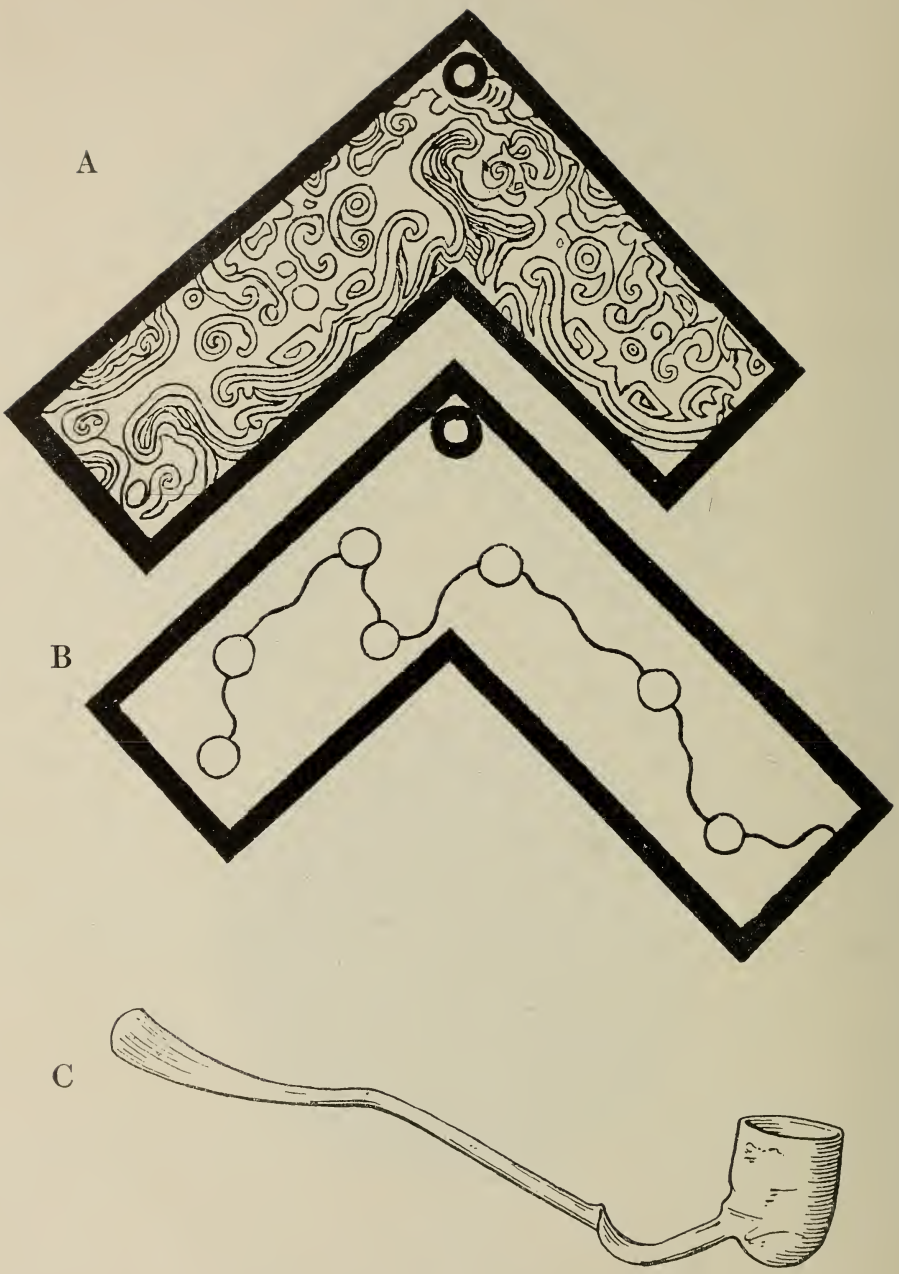
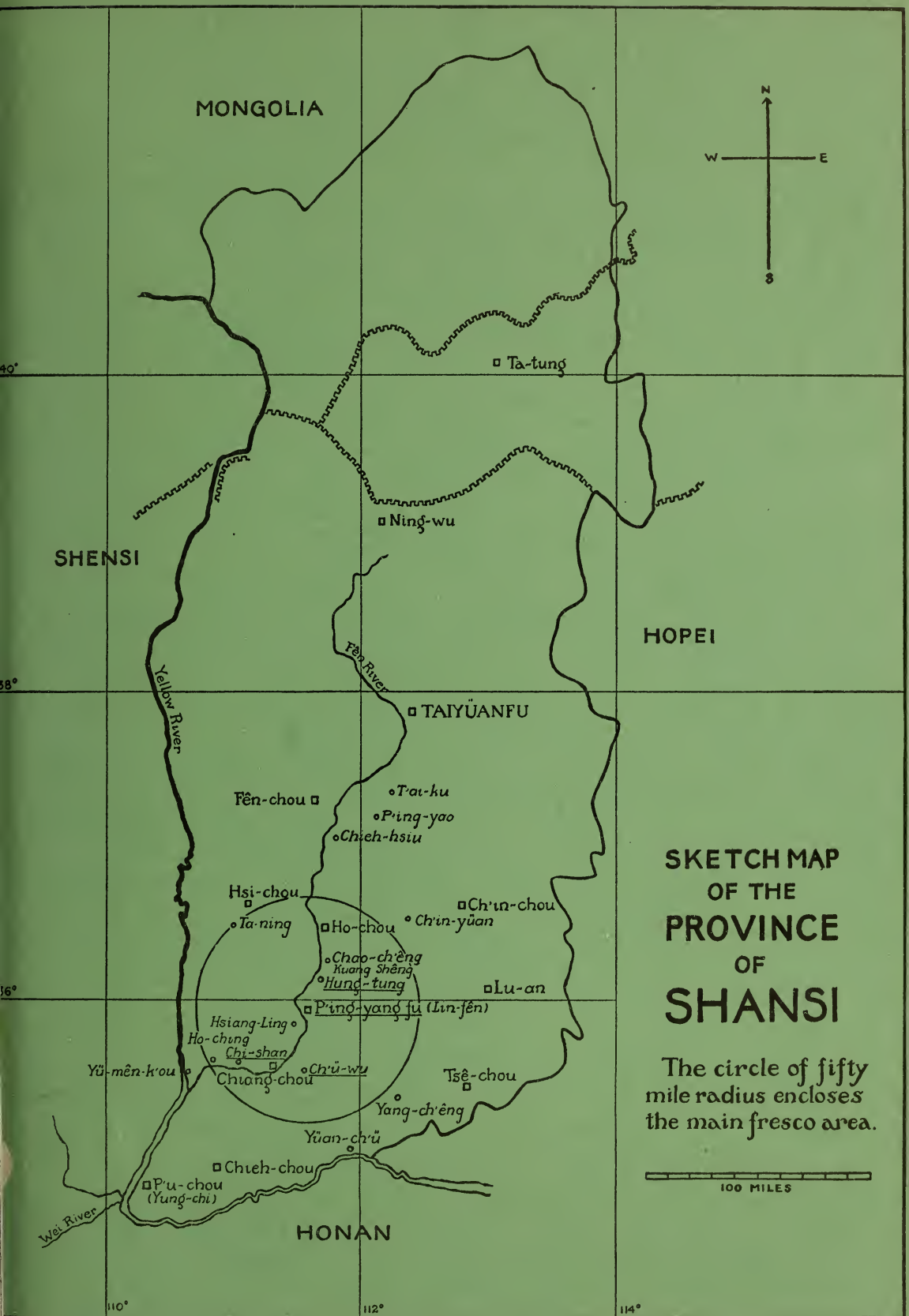


FIGURE 20

Ink-squeeze of Bronze Dipper Symbol.

A. Obverse. B. Reverse—showing Northern Dipper (Chin Shih So).

C. Line Drawing of Ancient Bronze Wine-dipper. Royal Ontario Museum.


MONGOLIA
N
W
E
S
40°
Ta-tung
Ning-wu
SHENSI
HOPEI
Fên River
Yellow River
38°
TAIYÜANFU
Fên-chou
T'ai-ku
P'ing-yao
Chieh-hsiu
Hsi-chou
Ch'in-chou
Ta-ning
Ho-chou
Ch'in-yüan
Chao-ch'êng
Kuang Shêng
Hung-tung
Lu-an
36°
P'ing-yang fu (Lin-fên)
Hsiang-Ling
Ho-chung
Chi-shan
Yü-mên-k'ou
Ch'ü-wu
Chiang-chou
Tsê-chou
Yang-ch'êng
Yüan-ch'ü
Chieh-chou
P'u-chou
(Yung-chi)
Wei River
HONAN
110°
112°
114°
SKETCH MAP
OF THE
PROVINCE
OF
SHANSI
The circle of fifty mile radius encloses the main fresco area.
100 MILES